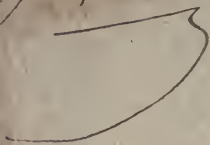








J. M. P. Doubrin -



FABLES
BY JOHN GAY,

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

FABLES

BY EDWARD MOORE.

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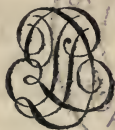
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STEREOTYPE EDITION,
According to the *process* of FIRMIN DIDOT.



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INTRODUCTION

TO THE

FABLES.

PART THE FIRST.

THE SHEPHERD AND THE PHILOSOPHER.

REMO^TE from cities liv'd a swain,
Unvex'd with all the cares of gain;
His head was silver'd o'er with age,
And long experience made him sage;
In summer's heat, and winter's cold,
He fed his flock, and penn'd the fold:
His hours in cheerful labour flew,
Nor envy nor ambition knew:
His wisdom and his honest fame
Through all the country rais'd his name.

A deep philosopher (whose rules
Of moral life were drawn from schools)
The shepherd's homely cottage sought,
And thus explor'd his reach of thought:

Whence is thy learning? Hath thy toil
O'er books consum'd the midnight oil?

Hast thou old Greece and Rome survey'd,
 And the vast sense of Plato weigh'd?
 Hath Socrates thy soul refin'd,
 And hast thou fathom'd Tully's mind?
 Or, like the wise Ulysses, thrown,
 By various fates, on realms unknown.
 Hast thou through various cities stray'd,
 Their customs, laws, and manners weigh'd?

The shepherd modestly reply'd,
 I ne'er the paths of learning try'd;
 Nor have I roam'd in foreign parts,
 To read mankind, their laws, and arts;
 For man is practis'd to disguise,
 He cheats the most discerning eyes;
 Who by that search shall wiser grow,
 When we ourselves can never know?
 The little knowledge I have gain'd
 Was all from simple Nature drain'd;
 Hence my life's maxims took their rise;
 Hence grew my settled hate to vice.

The daily labours of the bee
 Awake my soul to industry.
 Who can observe the careful ant,
 And not provide for future want?
 My dog (the trustiest of his kind)
 With gratitude inflames my mind;
 I mark his true, his faithful way,
 And in my service copy Tray.

In constancy and nuptial love,
I learn my duty from the dove.
The hen, who, from the chilly air,
With pious wing protects her care;
And ev'ry fowl that flies at large
Instructs me in a parent's charge.

From Nature too I take my rule,
To shun contempt and ridicule,
I never, with important air,
In conversation overbear.
Can grave and formal pass for wise,
When men the solemn owl despise?
My tongue within my lips I rein;
For who talks much must talk in vain,
We from the wordy torrent fly:
Who listens to the chatt'ring pye?
Nor would I, with felonious slight,
By stealth invade my neighbour's right.
Rapacious animals we hate:
Kites, hawks, and wolves, deserve their fate.
Do not we just abhorrence find
Against the toad and serpent kind?
But envy, calumny, and spite,
Bear stronger malice in their bite.
Thus, ev'ry object of creation
Can furnish hints to contemplation;
And, from the most minute and mean,
A virtuous mind can morals glean.

Thy fame is just, the sage replies ;
Thy virtue proves thee truly wise.
Pride often guides the author's pen ;
Books as affected are as men :
But he who studies Nature's laws
From certain truth his maxims draws ;
And those, without our schools, suffice
To make men moral, good, and wise.

FABLES

BY JOHN GAY.

PART THE FIRST.

TO HIS HIGHNESS

WILLIAM,
DUKE OF CUMBERLAND.

FABLE I.

THE LION, THE TYGER, AND THE TRAVELLER.

ACCEPT, young prince, the moral lay,
And in these tales mankind survey ;
With early virtues plant your breast,
The specious arts of vice detest.

Princes, like beauties, from their youth
Are strangers to the voice of truth :
Learn to condemn all praise betimes ;
For flattery's the nurse of crimes.
Friendship by sweet reproof is shown,
(A virtue never near a throne ;)
In courts such freedom must offend ;
There none presumes to be a friend.

To those of your exalted station
Each courtier is a dedication.
Must I too flatter like the rest,
And turn my morals to a jest?
The muse disdains to steal from those
Who thrive in courts by fulsome prose.

But shall I hide your real praise,
Or tell you what a nation says?
They in your infant-bosom trace
The virtues of your royal race:
In the fair dawning of your mind
Discern you gen'rous, mild, and kind,
They see you grieve to hear distress,
And pant already to redress.
Go on: the height of good attain,
Nor let a nation hope in vain:
For hence we justly may presage
The virtues of a riper age.
True courage shall your bosom fire,
And future actions own your sire.
Cowards are cruel: but the brave
Love mercy, and delight to save.

A tyger, roaming for his prey,
Sprung on a trav'ler in the way;
The prostrate game a lion spies,
And on the greedy tyrant flies;
With mingled roar resounds the wood;
Their teeth, their claws distil with blood;
Till vanquish'd by the lion's strength
The spotted foe extends his length.
The man besought the shaggy lord,
And on his knees for life implor'd.
His life the gen'rous hero gave.
Together walking to his cave,
The lion thus bespoke his guest:
What hardy beast shall dare contest

My matchless strength ! You saw the fight,
And must attest my pow'r and right ;
Forc'd to forego their native home,
My starving slaves at distance roam.
Within these woods I reign alone.
The boundless forest is my own.
Bears, wolves, and all the savage brood,
Have died the regal den with blood.
These carcasses on either hand,
Those bones that whiten all the land;
My former deeds and triumphs tell,
Beneath these jaws what numbers fell.

True, says the man, the strength I saw
Might well the brutal nation awe :
But shall a monarch, brave like you,
Place glory in so false a view ?
Robbers invade their neighbour's right.
Be lov'd : let justice bound your might.
Mean are ambitious heroes' boasts
Of wasted lands and slaughter'd hosts.
Pirates their pow'r by murders gain,
Wise kings by love and mercy reign.
To me your clemency hath shown
The virtue worthy of a throne.
Heav'n gives you pow'r above the rest,
Like heav'n, to succour the distress.

The case is plain, the monarch said ;
False glory hath my youth misled ;
For beasts of prey, a servile train,
Have been the flatterers of my reign.
You reason well. Yet tell me, friend,
Did ever you in courts attend ?
For all my fawning rogues agree
That human heroes rule like me.

FABLE II.

THE SPANIEL AND THE CAMELEON.

A SPANIEL, bred with all the care
 That waits upon a fav'rite heir,
 Ne'er felt correction's rigid hand :
 Indulg'd to disobey command,
 In pamper'd ease his hours were spent ;
 He never knew what learning meant.
 Such forward airs, so pert, so smart,
 Were sure to win his lady's heart ;
 Each little mischief gain'd him praise ;
 How pretty were his fawning ways !

The wind was south, the morning fair,
 He ventures forth to take the air :
 He ranges all the meadow round,
 And rolls upon the softest ground :
 When near him a cameleon seen
 Was scarce distinguish'd from the green :

Dear emblem of the flatt'ring host,
 What, live with clowns ! a genius lost !
 To cities and the court repair ;
 A fortune cannot fail thee there :
 Preferment shall thy talents crown,
 Believe me, friend : I know the town.

Sir, says the sycophant, like you,
 Of old, politer life I knew :
 Like you, a courtier born and bred,
 Kings lean'd their ear to what I said.
 My whisper always met success ;
 The ladies prais'd me for address.

I knew to hit each courtier's passion,
 And flatter'd ev'ry vice in fashion :
 But Jove, who hates the liar's ways,
 At once cut short my prosp'rous days ;
 And, sentenc'd to retain my nature,
 Transform'd me to this crawling creature ;
 Doom'd to a life obscure and mean,
 I wander in the sylvan scene.
 For Jove the heart alone regards ;
 He punishes what man rewards.
 How diff'rent is thy case and mine !
 With men at least you sup and dine ;
 While I, condemn'd to thinnest fare,
 Like those I flatter'd feed on air.

FABLE III.

THE MOTHER, THE NURSE, AND THE FAIRY.

GIVE me a son. The blessing sent,
 Were ever parents more content ?
 How partial are their doating eyes !
 No child is half so fair and wise.

Wak'd to the morning's pleasing care,
 The Mother rose, and sought her heir.
 She saw the nurse, like one possess'd,
 With wringing hands, and sobbing breast.

Sure some disaster has befall :
 Speak, nurse ; I hope the boy is well.

Dear madam, think not me to blame ;
 Invisible the fairy came :
 Your precious babe is hence convey'd,
 And in the place a changeling laid.

Where are the father's mouth and nose,
The mother's eyes, as black as sloes?
See here, a shocking awkward creature,
That speaks a fool in every feature!

The woman's blind, the mother cries;
I see wit sparkling in his eyes.

Lord! madam, what a squinting leer!
No doubt the fairy hath been here.

Just as she spoke, a pigmy sprite
Pops through the key-hole, swift as light;
Perch'd on the cradle's top he stands,
And thus her folly reprimands.

Whence sprung the vain conceited lie
That we the world with fools supply?
What! give our sprightly race away,
For the dull helpless sons of clay?
Besides, by partial fondness shown,
Like you we doat upon our own.
Where yet was ever found a mother,
Who'd give her booby for another?
And, should we change with human breed,
Well might we pass for fools indeed.

FABLE IV.

THE EAGLE, AND THE ASSEMBLY OF ANIMALS.

As Jupiter's all-seeing eye
Survey'd the worlds beneath the sky,
From this small speck of earth were sent
Murmurs and sounds of discontent;
For ev'ry thing alive complain'd
That he the hardest life sustain'd.

Jove calls his eagle. At the word,
Before him stands the royal bird.
The bird, obedient, from heav'n's height,
Downward directs his rapid flight ;
Then cited ev'ry living thing,
To hear the mandates of his king.

Ungrateful creatures, whence arise
These murmurs which offend the skies ?
Why this disorder ? say the cause ;
For just are Jove's eternal laws.
Let each his discontent reveal ;
To you, sour dog, I first appeal.

Hard is my lot, the hound replies,
On what fleet nerves the greyhound flies ?
While I, with weary step and slow,
O'er plains and vales, and mountains go.
The morning sees my chase begun,
Nor ends it till the setting sun.

When, says the greyhound, I pursue,
My game is lost, or caught in view ;
Beyond my sight the prey's secure,
The hound is slow, but always sure ;
And, had I his sagacious scent,
Jove ne'er had heard my discontent.

The lion crav'd the fox's art ;
The fox, the lion's force and heart.
The cock implor'd the pigeon's flight,
Whose wings were rapid, strong, and light ;
The pigeon strength of wing despis'd,
And the cock's matchless valour priz'd :
The fishes wish'd to graze the plain ;
The beasts, to skim beneath the main :
Thus, envious of another's state,
Each blam'd the partial hand of Fate.

The bird of heav'n then cry'd aloud,
Jove bids disperse the murm'ring crowd ;

The God rejects your idle pray'rs.
Would ye, rebellious mutineers,
Entirely change your name and nature,
And be the very envy'd creature?
What, silent all, and none consent!
Be happy, then, and learn content;
Nor imitate the restless mind,
And proud ambition of mankind.

FABLE V.

THE WILD BOAR AND THE RAM.

A GAINST an elm a sheep was tied,
The butcher's knife in blood was died:
The patient flock, in silent fright,
From far beheld the horrid sight.

A savage boar, who near them stood,
Thus mock'd to scorn the fleecy brood.

All cowards should be serv'd like you:
See, see, your murd'rer is in view;
With purple hands, and reeking knife,
He strips the skin yet warm with life:
Your quarter'd sires, your bleeding dams,
The dying bleat of harmless lambs
Call for revenge. O stupid race!
The heart that wants revenge is base.

I grant, an ancient ram replies,
We bear no terror in our eyes;
Yet think us not of soul so tame,
Which no repeated wrongs inflame;
Insensible of ev'ry ill,
Because we want thy tusks to kill.

Know, those who violence pursue
 Give to themselves the vengeance due :
 For in these massacres they find
 The two chief plagues that waste mankind.
 Our skin supplies the wrangling bar,
 It wakes their slumb'ring sons to war ;
 And well revenge may rest contented,
 Since drums and parchment were invented.

FABLE VI.

THE MISER AND PLUTUS.

THE wind was high, the window shakes,
 With sudden start the miser wakes ;
 Along the silent room he stalks,
 Looks back, and trembles as he walks.
 Each lock, and ev'ry bolt, he tries,
 In ev'ry creek and corner pries ;
 Then opes the chest with treasure stor'd,
 And stands in rapture o'er his hoard.
 But now with sudden qualms possess'd,
 He wrings his hands, he beats his breast.
 By conscience stung, he wildly stares ;
 And thus his guilty soul declares.

Had the deep earth her stores confin'd :
 This heart had known sweet peace of mind :
 But virtue's sold. Good gods ! what price
 Can recompense the pangs of vice !
 O bane of good ; seducing cheat !
 Can man, weak man, thy pow'r defeat ?
 Gold banish'd honour from the mind,
 And only left the name behind :

Gold sow'd the world with ev'ry ill;
Gold taught the murd'rer's sword to kill;
'Twas gold instructed coward hearts
In treach'ry's more pernicious arts.

Who can recount the mischiefs o'er?

Virtue resides on earth no more!

He spoke, and sigh'd. In angry mood,
Plutus, his god, before him stood.

The miser, trembling, lock'd his chest:

The vision frown'd, and thus addrest:

Whence is this vile ungrateful rant,
Each sordid rascal's daily cant?
Did I, base wretch, corrupt mankind?
The fault's in thy rapacious mind.
Because my blessings are abus'd,
Must I be censur'd, curs'd, accus'd?
E'en virtue's self by knaves is made
A cloak to carry on the trade;
And pow'r, when lodg'd in their possession,
Grows tyranny, and rank oppression.
Thus when the villain crams his chest,
Gold is the canker of the breast:
'Tis av'rice, insolence, and pride,
And ev'ry shocking vice beside.
But when to virtuous hands 'tis given,
It blesses, like the dew of heaven:
Like heav'n it hears the orphan's cries;
And wipes the tears from widows' eyes.
Their crimes on gold shall misers lay,
Who pawn their sordid souls for pay?
Let bravoes then, when blood is spilt,
Upbraid the passive soul with guilt.

FABLE VII.

THE LION, THE FOX, AND THE GEESE.

A LION, tir'd with state affairs,
Quite sick of pomp, and worn with cares,
Resolv'd, remote from noise and strife,
In peace to pass his latter life.

It was proclaim'd ; the day was set ;
Behold the gen'ral council met.
The fox was viceroy nam'd. The crowd
To the new regent humbly bow'd.
Wolves, bears, and mighty tygers bend,
And strive who most shall condescend.
He straight assumes a solemn grace,
Collects his wisdom in his face ;
The crowd admire his wit, his sense ;
Each word hath weight and consequence.
The flatt'rer all his art displays :
He who hath pow'r is sure of praise.

A fox stept forth before the rest,
And thus the servile throng address :
How vast his talents, born to rule,
And train'd in virtue's honest school !
What clemency his temper sways !
How uncorrupt are all his ways !
Beneath his conduct and command,
Rapine shall cease to waste the land,
His brain hath stratagem and art ;
Prudence and mercy rule his heart ;
What blessings must attend the nation
Under his good administration !

He said. A goose, who distant stood,
Harangu'd apart the cackling brood.

Whene'er I hear a knave commend,
He bids me shun his worthy friend.
What praise! what mighty commendation!
But 'twas a fox who spoke th' oration.
Foxes this government may prize,
As gentle, plentiful, and wise;
If they enjoy the sweets, 'tis plain
We geese must feel a tyrant reign.
What havock now shall thin our race,
When ev'ry petty clerk in place,
To prove his taste, and seem polite,
Will feed on geese both noon and night!

FABLE VIII.

THE LADY AND THE WASP.

WHAT whispers must the beauty bear!
What hourly nonsense hannts her ear!
Where'er her eyes dispense their charms,
Impertinence around her swarms.
Did not the tender nonsense strike,
Contempt and scorn might look dislike:
Forbidding airs might thin the place,
The slightest flap a fly can chase.
But who can drive the num'rous breed?
Chase one, another will succeed.
Who knows a fool, must know his brother;
One fop will recommend another:
And with this plague she's rightly curst,
Because she listen'd to the first.

As Doris, at her toilette's duty,
Sat meditating on her beauty,
She now was pensive, now was gay,
And loll'd the sultry hours away.

As thus in indolence she lies,
A giddy wasp around her flies.
He now advances, now retires,
Now to her neck and cheek aspires.
Her fan in vain defends her charms;
Swift he returns, again alarms;
For by repulse he bolder grew,
Perch'd on her lip and sipt the dew.

She frowns; she frets. Good gods! she cries,
Protect me from these teasing flies!
Of all the plagues that Heav'n hath sent,
A wasp is most impertinent.

The hov'ring insect thus complain'd;
Am I then slighted, scorn'd, disdain'd?
Can such offence your anger wake?
'Twas beauty caus'd the bold mistake.
Those cherry lips that breathe perfume,
That cheek so ripe with youthful bloom,
Made me with strong desire pursue
The fairest peach that ever grew.

Strike him not, Jenny, Doris cries,
Nor murder wasps like vulgar flies:
For though he's free, (to do him right,)
The creature's civil and polite.

In ecstasies away he posts;
Where'er he came the favour boasts;
Braggs how her sweetest tea he sips,
And shews the sugar on his lips.

The hint alarm'd the forward crew:
Sure of success away they flew.
They share the dainties of the day,
Round her with airy musick play;

And now they flutter, now they rest,
Now soar again, and skim her breast.
Nor were they banish'd, till she found
That wasps have stings, and felt the wound.

FABLE IX.

THE BULL AND THE MASTIFF.

SEEK you to train your fav'rite boy?
Each caution, ev'ry care employ;
And ere you venture to confide,
Let his preceptor's heart be try'd:
Weigh well his manners, life, and scope;
On these depends thy future hope.

As on a time in peaceful reign,
A bull enjoy'd the flow'ry plain,
A mastiff pass'd; inflam'd with ire,
His eye-balls shot indignant fire;
He foam'd, he rag'd with thirst of blood.

Spurning the ground, the monarch stood,
And roar'd aloud. Suspend the fight;
In a whole skin go sleep to night:
Or tell me, ere the battle rage,
What wrongs provoke thee to engage?
Is it ambition fires thy breast,
Or avarice that ne'er can rest?
From these alone unjustly springs
The world-destroying wrath of kings.

The surly mastiff thus returns:
Within my bosom glory burns,
Like heroes of eternal name,
Whom poets sing, I fight for fame.

The butcher's spirit-stirring mind
To daily war my youth inclin'd;
He train'd me to heroick deed,
Taught me to conquer, or to bleed.

Curs'd dog, the bull reply'd, no more
I wonder at thy thirst of gore;
For thou (beneath a butcher train'd,
Whose hands with cruelty are stain'd,
His daily murders in thy view)
Must, like thy tutor, blood pursue.
Take then thy fate. With goring wound,
At once he lifts him from the ground;
Aloft the sprawling hero flies,
Mangled he falls, he howls, and dies.

FABLE X.

THE ELEPHANT AND THE BOOKSELLER.

THE man who, with undaunted toils,
Sails unknown seas, to unknown soils,
With various wonders feasts his sight:
What stranger wonders does he write!
We read, and in description view
Creatures which Adam never knew:
For when we risk no contradiction,
It prompts the tongue to deal in fiction.
Those things that startle me or you
I grant are strange, yet may be true.
Who doubts that elephants are found
For science and for sense renown'd?
Borri records their strength of parts,
Extent of thought, and skill in arts:

How they perform the law's decrees,
And save the state the hangman's fees,
And how by travel understand
The language of another land.
Let those who question this report,
To Pliny's ancient page resort.
How learn'd was that sagacious breed!
Who now, like them, the Greek can read?

As one of these, in days of yore,
Rummag'd a shop of learning o'er;
Not, like our modern dealers, minding
Only the margin's breadth and binding;
A book his curious eye detains,
Where, with exactest care and pains,
Were ev'ry beast and bird portray'd
That e'er the search of man surve'y'd;
Their natures and their pow'rs were writ,
With all the pride of human wit.
The page he with attention spread,
And thus remark'd on what he read.

Man with strong reason is endow'd;
A beast scarce instinct is allow'd:
But let this author's worth be try'd,
'Tis plain that neither was his guide.
Can he discern the diff'rent natures,
And weigh the pow'r of other creatures,
Who by the partial work hath shown
He knows so little of his own?
How falsely is the spaniel drawn!
Did man from him first learn to fawn?
A dog proficient in the trade!
He, the chief flatt'rer nature made!
Go, man, the ways of courts discern,
You'll find a spaniel still might learn.

How can the fox's theft and plunder
 Provoke his censure or his wonder?
 From courtiers' tricks, and lawyers' arts
 The fox might well improve his parts.
 The lion, wolf, and tyger's brood,
 He curses for their thirst of blood:
 But is not man to man a prey?
 Beasts kill for hunger, men for pay.

The bookseller, who heard him speak,
 And saw him turn a page of Greek,
 Thought, what a genius have I found!
 Then thus address'd with bow profound.

Learn'd Sir, if you'd employ your pen
 Against the senseless sons of men;
 Or write the history of Siam,
 No man is better pay than I am;
 Or, since you're learn'd in Greek, let's see
 Something against the Trinity.

When wrinkling with a sneer his trunk,
 Friend, quoth the elephant, you're drunk:
 E'en keep your money, and be wise;
 Leave man on man to criticise:
 For that you ne'er can want a pen
 Among the senseless sons of men:
 They unprovok'd will court the fray:
 Envy's a sharper spur than pay.
 No author ever spar'd a brother;
 Wits are game-cocks to one another.

FABLE XI.

THE PEACOCK, THE TURKEY, AND THE GOOSE.

IN beauty faults conspicuous grow;
 The smallest speck is seen on snow.

As near a barn, by hunger led,
 A peacock with the poultry fed;
 All view'd him with an envious eye.
 And mock'd his gaudy pageantry.
 He, conscious of superior merit,
 Contemns their base reviling spirit;
 His state and dignity assumes,
 And to the sun displays his plumes;
 Which, like the heav'n's o'er-arching skies,
 Are spangled with a thousand eyes.
 The circling rays, and varied light,
 At once confound their dazzled sight:
 On ev'ry tongue detraction burns,
 And malice prompts their spleen by turns.

Mark with what insolence and pride
 The creature takes his haughty stride!
 The turkey cries. Can spleen contain?
 Sure never bird was half so vain:
 But were intrinsick merit seen,
 We turkeys have the whiter skin.

From tongue to tongue they caught abuse;
 And next was heard the hissing goose.
 What hideous legs! what filthy claws!
 I scorn to censure little flaws.
 Then what a horrid squawling throat!
 Ev'n owls are frightened at the note.

True, those are faults, the peacock cries;
 My scream, my shanks you may despise;
 But such blind criticks rail in vain:
 What, overlook my radiant train!
 Know, did my legs, your scorn and sport,
 The turkey or the goose support,
 And did ye scream with harsher sound,
 Those faults in you had ne'er been found;
 To all apparent beauties blind,
 Each blemish strikes an envious mind.

Thus in assemblies have I seen
A nymph of brightest charms and mien
Wake envy in each ugly face,
And buzzing scandal fill the place.

FABLE XII.

CUPID, HYMEN, AND PLUTUS.

As Cupid in Cythera's grove
Employ'd the lesser pow'rs of love,
Some shape the bow, or fit the string,
Some give the taper shaft its wing,
Or turn the polish'd quiver's mould,
Or head the darts with temper'd gold.
Amidst their toil and various care,
Thus hymen, with assuming air,
Address'd the God. Thou purblind chit,
Of aukward and ill-judging wit,
If matches are not better made,
At once I must forswear my trade.
You send me such ill coupled folks,
That 'tis a shame to sell them yokes.
They squabble for a pin, a feather,
And wonder how they came together.
The husband's sullen, dogged, shy;
The wife grows flippant in reply:
He loves command and due restriction;
And she as well likes contradiction:
She never slavishly submits;
She'll have her will, or have her fits.
He this way tugs, she t'other draws;
The man grows jealous, and with cause.

Nothing can save him but divorce ;
And here the wife complies of course.

When, says the boy, had I to do
With either your affairs or you ?

I never idly spend my darts ;
You trade in mercenary hearts.

For settlements the lawyer's fee'd ;
Is my hand witness to the deed ?

If they like cat and dog agree,
Go rail at Plutus, not at me.

Plutus appear'd, and said : 'Tis true ;
In marriage gold is all their view ;

They seek not beauty, wit, or sense ;
And love is seldom the pretence.

All offer incense at my shrine,
And I alone the bargain sign.

How can Belinda blame her fate ?
She only ask'd a great estate.

Doris was rich enough, 'tis true ;
Her lord must give her title too ;

And ev'ry man, or rich or poor,
A fortune asks, and asks no more.

Av'rice, whatever shape it bears,
Must still be coupled with its cares.

FABLE XIII.

THE TAME STAG.

As a young stag the thicket past,
The branches held his antlers fast ;
A clown, who saw the captive hung,
Across the horns his halter flung.

Now safely hamper'd in the cord,
He bore the present to his lord.
His lord was pleas'd; as was the clown,
When he was tip'd with half-a-crown.
The stag was brought before his wife;
The tender lady begg'd his life.
How sleek's the skin! how speck'd like ermine!
Sure never creature was so charming!

At first within the yard confin'd,
He flies and hides from all mankind;
Now bolder grown, with fix'd amaze,
And distant awe, presumes to gaze;
Munches the linen on the lines,
And on a hood or apron dines;
He steals my little master's bread,
Follows the servants to be fed:
Nearer and nearer now he stands,
To feel the praise of patting hands;
Examines ev'ry fist for meat,
And though repuls'd, disdains retreat;
Attacks again with levell'd horns;
And man, that was his terror, scorns.

Such is the country maiden's fright,
When first a red-coat is in sight,
Behind the door she hides her face;
Next time at distance eyes the lace.
She now can all his terrors stand,
Nor from his squeeze withdraws her band.
She plays familiar in his arms,
And ev'ry soldier hath his charms.
From tent to tent she spreads her flame;
For custom conquers fear and shame.

FABLE XIV.

THE MONKEY WHO HAD SEEN THE WORLD.

A MONKEY, to reform the times,
Resolv'd to visit foreign climes :
For men in distant regions roam
To bring politer manners home,
So forth he fares ; all toils defies :
Misfortune serves to make us wise.

At length the treach'rous snare was laid ;
Poor pug was caught, to town convey'd,
There sold. How envy'd was his doom,
Made captive in a lady's room !
Proud as a lover of his chains,
He day by day her favour gains.
Whene'er the duty of the day
The toilette calls ; with mimic play
He twirls her knots, he cracks her fan,
Like any other gentleman.
In visits too, his parts and wit,
When jests grew dull, were sure to hit.
Proud with applause, he thought his mind
In ev'ry courtly art refin'd ;
Like Orpheus, burnt with publick zeal,
To civilize the Monkey-weal :
So watch'd occasion, broke his chain,
And sought his native woods again.

The hairy sylvans round him press,
Astonish'd at his strut and dress.
Some praise his sleeve ; and others glote
Upon his rich embroider'd coat ;

His dapper perriwig commending,
With the black tail behind depending;
His powder'd back, above, below,
Like hoary frost, or fleecy snow;
But all, with envy and desire,
His flutt'ring shoulder-knot admire.

Hear, and improve, he pertly cries;
I come to make a nation wise.
Weigh your own worth; support your place,
The next in rank to human race.
In cities long I pass'd my days,
Convers'd with men, and learn'd their ways.
Their dress, their courtly manners see;
Reform your state, and copy me.
Seek ye to thrive? in flatt'ry deal;
Your scorn, your hate, with that conceal.
Seem only to regard your friends,
But use them for your private ends.
Stint not to truth the flow of wit;
Be prompt to lie whene'er 'tis fit.
Bend all your force to spatter merit:
Scandal is conversation's spirit.
Boldly to ev'ry thing pretend,
And men your talents shall commend.
I knew the great, Observe me right;
So shall you grow, like man, polite.

He spoke, and bow'd, With mutt'ring jaws
The wond'ring circle grinn'd applause.
Now, warm'd with malice, envy, spite,
Their most obliging friends they bite,
And, fond to copy human ways,
Practise new mischiefs all their days.

Thus the dull lad, too tall for school,
With travel finishes the fool;

Studious of ev'ry coxcomb's airs,
 He drinks, games, dresses, whores and swears;
 O'erlooks with scorn all virtuous arts,
 For vice is fitted to his parts.

FABLE X V.

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE PHEASANTS.

THE sage, awak'd at early day,
 Through the deep forest took his way;
 Drawn by the musick of the groves,
 Along the winding gloom he roves:
 From tree to tree the warbling throats
 Prolong the sweet alternate notes.
 But where he past, he terror threw,
 The song broke short, the warblers flew;
 The thrushes chatter'd with affright,
 And nightingales abhorr'd his sight;
 All animals before him ran,
 To shun the hateful sight of man.

Whence is this dread of ev'ry creature?
 Fly they our figure or our nature?

As thus he walk'd in musing thought,
 His ear imperfect accents caught:
 With cautious step he nearer drew
 By the thick shade conceal'd from view.
 High on the branch a pheasant stood,
 Around her all her list'ning brood;
 Proud of the blessings of her nest,
 She thus a mother's care exprest.

No dangers here shall circumvent;
 Within the woods enjoy content.

Sooner the hawk or vulture trust
Than man, of animals the worst.
In him ingratitude you find,
A vice peculiar to the kind,
The sheep, whose annual fleece is died,
To guard his health and serve his pride,
Forc'd from his fold and native plain,
Is in the cruel shambles slain.
The swarms, who, with industrious skill,
His hives with wax and honey fill,
In vain whole summer days employ'd,
Their stores are sold, their race destroy'd.
What tribute from the goose is paid !
Does not her wing all science aid !
Does it not lover's hearts explain,
And drudge to raise the merchant's gain ?
What now rewards this gen'ral use ?
He takes the quills, and eats the goose,
Man then avoid, detest his ways ;
So safety shall prolong your days.
When services are thus acquitted,
Be sure we pheasants must be spitted.

FABLE XVI.

THE PIN AND THE NEEDLE.

A PIN, who long had serv'd a beauty,
Proficient in the toilette's duty,
Had form'd her sleeve, confin'd her hair,
Or giv'n her knot a smarter air,
Now nearest to her heart was plac'd,
Now in her mantua's tail disgrac'd ;

But could she partial fortune blame,
Who saw her lovers serv'd the same?

At length from all her honours cast,
Through various turns of life she past;
Now glitter'd on a tailor's arm;
Now kept a beggar's infant warm;
Now, rang'd within a miser's coat,
Contributes to his yearly groat;
Now, rais'd again from low approach,
She visits in the doctor's coach;
Here, there, by various fortune tost,
At last in Gresham-hall was lost.
Charm'd with the wonders of the show,
On ev'ry side, above, below,
She now of this or that enquires,
What least was understood admires.
'Tis plain, each thing so struck her mind,
Her head's of virtuoso kind.

And pray what's this, and this, dear Sir?
A needle, says th' interpreter.
She knew the name. And thus the fool
Address'd her as a tailor's tool.

A needle with that filthy stone,
Quite idle, all with rust o'ergrown!
You better might employ your parts,
And aid the sempstress in her arts.
But tell me how the friendship grew
Between that paltry flint and you?

Friend, says the needle, cease to blame;
I follow real worth and fame.
Know'st thou the loadstone's pow'r and art,
That virtue virtues can impart?
Of all his talents I partake,
Who then can such a friend forsake?
'Tis I direct the pilot's hand
To shun the rocks and treach'rous sand:

By me the distant world is known,
And either India is our own.
Had I with milliners been bred,
What had I been? The guide of thread;
And drudg'd as vulgar needles do,
Of no more consequence than you.

FABLE XVII.

THE SHEPHERD'S DOG AND THE WOLF.

A WOLF, with hunger fierce and bold,
Ravag'd the plains, and thinn'd the fold;
Deep in the wood secure he lay,
The thefts of night regal'd the day.
In vain the shepherd's wakeful care
Had spread the toils, and watch'd the snare;
In vain the dog pursu'd his pæcè,
The fleeter robber mock'd the chase.

As Lightfoot rang'd the forest round,
By chance his foe's retreat he found.

Let us awhile the war suspend,
And reason as from friend to friend.

A truce? replies the wolf. 'Tis done.
The dog the parley thus begun:

How can that strong intrepid mind
Attack a weak defenceless kind?
Those jaws should prey on nobler food,
And drink the boar's and lion's blood.
Great souls with gen'rous pity melt,
Which coward tyrants never felt.
How harmless is our fleecy care!
Be brave; and let thy mercy spare.

Friend, says the wolf, the matter weigh :
 Nature design'd us beasts of prey ;
 As such, when hunger finds a treat,
 'Tis necessary wolves should eat.
 If mindful of the bleating weal,
 Thy bosom burn with real zeal,
 Hence, and thy tyrant lord beseech ;
 To him repeat the moving speech :
 A wolf eats sheep, but now and then ;
 Ten thousands are devour'd by men.
 An open foe may prove a curse,
 But a pretended friend is worse.

FABLE XVIII.

THE PAINTER WHO PLEAS'D NOBODY AND EVERY BODY.

LEST men suspect your tale untrue,
 Keep probability in view.
 The trav'ler leaping o'er those bounds,
 The credit of his book confounds.
 Who with his tongue hath armies routed,
 Makes ev'n his real courage doubted.
 But flatt'ry never seems absurd ;
 The flatter'd always take your word ;
 Impossibilities seem just :
 They take the strongest praise on trust.
 Hyperboles, tho' ne'er so great,
 Will still come short of self-conceit.

So very like a painter drew,
 That ev'ry eye the picture knew ;
 He hit complexion, feature, air,
 So just, the life itself was there.

No flatt'ry with his colours laid,
To bloom restor'd the faded maid;
He gave each muscle all its strength;
The mouth, the chin, the nose's length,
His honest pencil touch'd with truth,
And mark'd the date of age and youth.

He lost his friends, his practice fail'd;
'Truth should not always be reveal'd;
In dusty piles his pictures lay,
For no one sent the second pay.
Two bustoes, fraught with ev'ry grace,
A Venus' and Apollo's face,
He plac'd in view; resolv'd to please,
Whoever sat he drew from these,
From these corrected ev'ry feature,
And spirited each aukward creature.

All things were set; the hour was come,
His pallet ready o'er his thumb;
My lord appear'd; and seated right,
In proper attitude and light,
The painter look'd, he sketch'd the piece,
Then dipt his pencil, talk'd of Greece,
Of Titian's tints, of Gnido's air;
Those eyes, my lord, the spirit there
Might well a Raphael's hand require,
To give them all the native fire;
The features fraught with sense and wit,
You'll grant, are very hard to hit;
But yet with patience you shall view
As much as paint and art can do.

Observe the work. My lord reply'd,
'Till now I thought my mouth was wide;
Besides, my nose is somewhat long;
Dear Sir, for me, 'tis far too young.

Oh! pardon me, the artist cry'd,
In this we painters must decide:

The piece ev'n common eyes must strike;
I warrant it extremely like.

My lord examin'd it a new;
No looking-glass seem'd half so true.

A lady came: with borrow'd grace
He from his Venus form'd her face.
Her lover prais'd the painter's art;
So like the picture in his heart!
To ev'ry age some charm he lent;
Ev'n beauties were almost content.

Through all the town his art they prais'd;
His custom grew; his price was rais'd.
Had he the real likeness shown,
Would any man the picture own?
But when thus happily he wrought,
Each found the likeness in his thought.

FABLE XIX.

THE LION AND THE CUB.

How fond are men of rule and place,
Who court it from the mean and base!
These cannot bear an equal nigh
But from superior merit fly.
They love the cellar's vulgar joke,
And lose their hours in ale and smoke;
There o'er some petty club preside;
So poor, so paltry in their pride!
Nay, ev'n with fools whole nights will sit,
In hopes to be supreme in wit.
If these can read, to these I write,
To set their worth in truest light.

A lion-cub, of sordid mind,
Avoided all the lion kind;
Fond of applause, he sought the feasts
Of vulgar and ignoble beasts;
With asses all his time he spent,
Their club's perpetual president.
He caught their manners, looks, and airs;
An ass in ev'ry thing, but ears!
If e'er his highness meant a joke,
They grinn'd applause before he spoke;
But at each word, what shouts of praise!
Good gods! how natural he brays!

Elate with flatt'ry and conceit,
He seeks his royal sire's retreat;
Forward, and fond to show his parts,
His highness brays; the lion starts.

Puppy, that curs'd vociferation
Betrays thy life and conversation:
Coxcombs, an ever-noisy race,
Are trumpets of their own disgrace.

Why so severe! the cub replies;
Our senate always held me wise.
How weak is pride! returns the sire;
All fools are vain, when fools admire!
But know, what stupid asses prize,
Lions and noble beasts despise.

FABLE XX.

THE OLD HEN AND THE COCK.

RESTRAIN your child; you'll soon believe
The text which says we sprung from Eve.

As an old hen led forth her train,
 And seem'd to peck to shew the grain;
 She rak'd the chaff, she scratch'd the ground,
 And glean'd the spacious yard around;
 A giddy chick, to try her wings,
 On the well's narrow margin springs,
 And prone she drops. The mother's breast
 All day with sorrow was possest.

A cock she met; her son she knew,
 And in her heart affection grew.

My son, says she, I grant your years
 Have reach'd beyond a mother's cares.
 I see you vig'rous, strong, and bold;
 I hear with joy your triumphs told.
 'Tis not from cocks thy fate I dread;
 But let thy ever-wary tread
 Avoid yon well; that fatal place
 Is sure perdition to our race.
 Print this my counsel on thy breast;
 To the just gods I leave the rest.
 He thank'd her care: yet day by day
 His bosom burn'd to disobey;
 And ev'ry time the well he saw,
 Scorn'd in his heart the foolish law;
 Near and more near each day he drew,
 And long'd to try the dang'rous view.

Why was this idle charge? he cries:
 Let courage female fears despise.
 Or did she doubt my heart was brave,
 And therefore this injunction gave?
 Or does her harvest store the place,
 A treasure for her younger race?
 And would she thus my search prevent?
 * I stand resolv'd, and dare th' event.

Thus said. He mounts the margin's round,
 And pries into the depth profound.

He stretch'd his neck ; and from below
With stretching neck advanc'd a foe ;
With wrath his ruffled plume he rears,
The foe with ruffled plume appears :
Threat answer'd threat : his fury grew,
Headlong to meet the war he flew.
But when the wat'ry death he found,
He thus lamented as he drown'd :
 I ne'er had been in this condition,
But for my mother's prohibition.

FABLE XXI.

THE RAT-CATCHER AND CATS.

THE rats by night such mischief did,
Petty was ev'ry morning chid :
They undermin'd whole sides of bacon,
Her cheese was sapp'd, her tarts were taken ;
Her pasties, fenc'd with thickest paste,
Were all demolish'd and laid waste.
She curs'd the cat for want of duty,
Who left her foes a constant booty.

 An engineer, of noted skill,
Engag'd to stop the growing ill.

 From room to room he now surveys
Their haunts, their works, their secret ways.
Finds where they 'scape an ambushade,
And whence the nightly sally's made.

 An envious cat from place to place,
Unseen, attends his silent pace ;
She saw that, if his trade went on,
The purring race must be undone ;

So secretly removes his baits,
And ev'ry stratagem defeats.

Again he sets the poison'd toils,
And puts again the labour foils.

What for to frustrate my designs,
My schemes thus nightly countermines?
Incens'd, he cries; this very hour
The wretch shall bleed beneath my pow'r.

So said. A pond'rous trap he brought,
And in the fact poor puss was caught.

Smuggler, says he, thou shalt be made
A victim to our loss of trade.

The captive cat, with piteous mews,
For pardon, life, and freedom sues.
A sister of the science spare;
One int'rest is our common care.

What insolence! the man reply'd:
Shall cats with us the game divide;
Were all your interloping band
Extinguish'd, or expell'd the land,
We rat-catchers might raise our fees,
Sole guardians of a nation's cheese!

A cat, who saw the lifted knife,
Thus spoke, and sav'd her sister's life:
In ev'ry age and clime, we see,
Two of a trade can ne'er agree.
Each hates his neighbour for encroaching;
'Squire stigmatises 'squire for poaching;
Beauties with beauties are in arms,
And scandal pelts each other's charms;
Kings too their neighbour kings dethrone,
In hope to make the world their own.
But let us limit our desires,
Not war like beauties, kings, and 'squires:
For though we both one prey pursue,
'There's game enough for us and you.

FABLE XXII.

THE GOAT WITHOUT A BEARD.

'T IS certain that the modish passions
Descend among the crowd like fashions:
Excuse me then if pride, conceit,
(The manners of the fair and great,)
I give to monkeys, asses, dogs,
Fleas, owls, goats, butterflies, and hogs.
I say that these are proud. What then?
I never said they equal men.

A goat, as vain as goat can be,
Affected singularity.
Where'er a thymy bank he found,
He roll'd upon the fragrant ground;
And then with fond attention stood,
Fix'd o'er his image in the flood.

I hate my frowzy beard, he cries:
My youth is lost in this disguise.
Did not the females know my vigour,
Well might they loath this rev'rend figure.

Resolv'd to smooth his shaggy face,
He sought the barber of the place,
A flippant monkey, spruce and smart,
Hard by, profess'd the dapper art.
His pole with pewter basons hung,
Black rotten teeth in order strung!
Rang'd cups, that in the window stood,
Lin'd with red rags, to look like blood,
Did well his threefold trade explain,
Who shav'd, drew teeth, and breath'd a vein.

The goat he welcomes with an air,
And seats him in his wooden chair:
Mouth, nose, and cheeks the lather hides:
Light, smooth, and swift, the razor glides.

I hope your custom, Sir, says pug;
Sure never face was half so smug.

The goat, impatient for applause,
Swift to the neighb'ring hill withdraws;
The shaggy people grinn'd and star'd.
Heighday! what's here? without a beard.
Say, brother, whence the dire disgrace?
What envious hand hath robb'd your face?
When thus the fop with smiles of scorn:
Are beards by civil nations worn?
Ev'n Muscovites have mow'd their chins,
Shall we, like formal capuchins,
Stubborn in pride, retain the mode,
And bear about the hairy load?
Whene'er we through the village stray,
Are we not mock'd along the way;
Insulted with loud shouts of scorn;
By boys our beards disgrac'd and torn?

Were you no more with goats to dwell,
Brother, I grant you reason well,
Replies a bearded chief. Beside,
If boys can mortify thy pride,
How wilt thou stand the ridicule
Of our whole flock? affected fool!
Coxcombs distinguish'd from the rest
To all but coxcombs are a jest.

FABLE XXIII.

THE OLD WOMAN AND HER CATS.

W^HO friendship with a knave hath made
Is judg'd a partner in the trade.
The matron who conducts abroad
A willing nymph, is thought a bawd;
And if a modest girl is seen
With one who cures a lover's spleen,
We guess her not extremely nice,
And only wish to know her price.
'Tis thus, that on the choice of friends
Our good or evil name depends.

A wrinkled hag, of wicked fame,
Beside a little smoaky flame
Sat hov'ring, pinch'd with age and frost;
Her shrivell'd hands, with veins emboss'd,
Upon her knees her weight sustains,
While palsy shook her crazy brains:
She mumbles forth her backward pray'rs,
An untain'd scold of fourscore years.
About her swarm'd a num'rous brood
Of cats, who lank with hunger mew'd.

Teaz'd with their cries, her choler grew,
And thus she sputter'd: Hence, ye crew;
Fool that I was to entertain
Such imps, such fiends, a hellish train!
Had ye been never hous'd and nurs'd,
I, for a witch, had ne'er been curs'd.
To you I owe that crowds of boys
Worry me with eternal noise;

Straws laid across my pace retard,
 The horse-shoe's nail'd, (each threshold's guard,)
 The stunted broom the wenches hide,
 For fear that I should up and ride;
 They stick with pins my bleeding seat,
 And bid me show my secret teat.

To hear you prate would vex a saint:
 Who hath most reason of complaint?
 Replies a cat. Let's come to proof.
 Had we ne'er starv'd beneath your roof,
 We had, like others of our race,
 In credit liv'd as beasts of chase.
 'Tis infamy to serve a hag;
 Cats are thought imps, her broom a nag;
 And boys against our lives combine,
 Because, 'tis said, your cats have nine.

FABLE XXIV.

THE BUTTERFLY AND THE SNAIL.

ALL upstarts insolent in place,
 Remind us of their vulgar race.

As in the sunshine of the morn,
 A butterfly, but newly born,
 Sat proudly perking on a rose.
 With pert conceit his bosom glows;
 His wings, all glorious to behold,
 Bedropt with azure, jet, and gold,
 Wide he displays; the spangled dew
 Reflects his eyes, and various hue.

His now forgotten friend, a snail,
 Beneath his house, with slimy trail

Crawls o'er the grass; whom when he spies,
In wrath he to the gard'ner cries:
What means yon peasant's daily toil,
From choaking weeds to rid the soil?
Why wake you to the morning's care?
Why with new arts correct the year?
Why grows the peach with crimson hue?
And why the plum's inviting blue?
Were they to feast his taste design'd,
That vermin of voracious kind?
Crush then the slow, the pilf'ring race;
So purge thy garden from disgrace.

What arrogance! the snail reply'd;
How insolent is upstart pride?
Hadst thou not thus with insult vain
Provok'd my patience to complain,
I had conceal'd thy meaner birth,
Nor trac'd thee to the scum of earth.
For scarce nine suns have wak'd the hours,
To swell the fruit, and paint the flow'rs,
Since I thy humbler life survey'd,
In base and sordid guise array'd,
A hideous insect, vile, unclean,
You dragg'd a slow and noisome train;
And from your spider bowels drew
Foul film, and spun the dirty clue.
I own my humble life, good friend;
Snail was I born, and snail shall end,
And what's a butterfly? At best,
He's but a caterpillar drest;
And all thy race, a num'rous seed,
Shall prove of caterpillar breed.

FABLE XXV.

THE SCOLD AND THE PARROT.

THE husband thus reprov'd his wife:
Who deals in slander, lives in strife.
Art thou, the herald of disgrace,
Denouncing war to all thy race?
Can nothing quell thy thunder's rage,
Which spares nor friend, nor sex, nor age?
That vixen tongue of yours, my dear,
Alarms our neighbours far and near:
Good gods! 'tis like a rolling river,
That murmur'ing flows, and flows for ever!
Ne'er tir'd, perpetual discord sowing!
Like fame, it gathers strength by going.

Heighday! the flippant tongue replies,
How solemn is the fool! how wise!
Is nature's choicest gift debarr'd?
Nay, frown not; for I will be heard.
Women of late are finely ridden,
A parrot's privilege forbidden?
You praise his talk, his squawling song;
But wives are always in the wrong.

Now reputations flew in pieces,
Of mothers, daughters, aunts, and nieces;
She ran the parrot's language o'er,
Bawd, hussy, drunkard, slattern, whore;
On all the sex she vents her fury,
Tries and condemns without a jury.

At once the torrent of her words
Alarm'd cat, monkey, dogs, and birds:

All join their forces to confound her.
 Puss spits, the monkey chatters round her;
 The yelping cur her heels assaults;
 The magpie blabs out all her faults;
 Poll, in the uproar, from his cage,
 With this rebuke out scream'd her rage.

A parrot is for talking priz'd,
 But prattling women are despis'd.
 She who attacks another's honour
 Draws ev'ry living thing upon her.
 Think, madam, when you stretch your lungs,
 That all your neighbours too have tongues:
 One slander must ten thousand get,
 The world with int'rest pays the debt.

FABLE XXVI.

THE CUR AND THE MASTIFF.

A SNEAKING cur, the master's spy,
 Rewarded for his daily lie,
 With secret jealousies and fears
 Set all together by the ears.
 Poor puss to-day was in disgrace,
 Another cat supply'd her place;
 The hound was beat, the mastiff chid,
 The monkey was the room forbid;
 Each to his dearest friend grew shy,
 And none could tell the reason why.

A plan to rob the house was laid:
 The thief with love seduc'd the maid,
 Cajol'd the cur, and strok'd his head,
 And bought his secrecy with bread.

He next the mastiff's honour tried,
 Whose honest jaws the bribe defied.
 He stretch'd his hand to proffer more;
 The surly dog his fingers tore.

Swift ran the cur: with indignation
 The master took his information.
 Hang him, the villain's curs'd, he cries;
 And round his neck the halter ties.

The dog his humble suit preferr'd,
 And begg'd in justice to be heard.
 The master sat. On either hand
 The cited dogs confronting stand;
 The cur the bloody tale relates,
 And, like a lawyer, aggravates.

Judge not unheard, the mastiff cried,
 But weigh the cause of either side.
 Think not that treach'ry can be just,
 Take not informers' words on trust.
 They ope their hand to ev'ry pay,
 And you and me by turns betray.

He spoke. And all the truth appear'd,
 The cur was hang'd, the mastiff clear'd.

FABLE XXVII.

THE SICK MAN AND THE ANGEL.

Is there no hope? the sick man said.
 The silent doctor shook his head,
 And took his leave, with signs of sorrow,
 Despairing of his see to-morrow.

When thus the man, with gasping breath:
 I feel the chilling wound of death:

Since I must bid the world adieu,
Let me my former life review.
I grant, my bargains well were made,
But all men over-reach in trade ;
'Tis self-defence in each profession :
Sure self-defence is no transgression.
The little portion in my hands,
By good security on lands,
Is well increas'd. If unawares
My justice to myself and heirs
Hath let my debtor rot in jail,
For want of good sufficient bail ;
If I by writ, or bond, or deed,
Reduc'd a family to need,
My will hath made the world amends ;
My hope on charity depends.
When I am number'd with the dead,
And all my pious gifts are read,
By heav'n and earth 'twill then be known
My charities were amply shown.

An angel came. Ah, friend ! he cried,
No more in flatt'ring hope confide.
Can thy good deeds in former times
Outweigh the balance of thy crimes ?
What widow or what orphan prays
To crown thy life with length of days ?
A pious action's in thy pow'r,
Embrace with joy the happy hour:
Now, while you draw the vital air,
Prove your intention is sincere :
This instant give a hundred pound ;
Your neighbours want, and you abound.

But why such haste ? the sick man whines ;
Who knows as yet what heav'n designs ?
Perhaps I may recover still :
That sum and more are in my will.

Fool, says the vision, now 'tis plain,
 Your life, your soul, your heav'n was gain.
 From ev'ry side, with all your might,
 You scrap'd and scrap'd beyond your right;
 And after death would fain atone,
 By giving what is not your own.

While there is life, there's hope, he cried;
 Then why such haste? So groan'd, and died.

FABLE XXVIII.

THE PERSIAN, THE SUN, AND THE CLOUD.

Is there a bard whom genius fires,
 Whose ev'ry thought the god inspires?
 When envy reads the nervous lines,
 She frets, she rails, she raves, she pines;
 Her hissing snakes with venom swell;
 She calls her venal train from hell:
 The servile fiends her nod obey,
 And all Curl's authors are in pay;
 Fame calls up calumny and spite:
 Thus shadow owes its birth to light.

As prostrate to the god of day,
 With heart devout, a Persian lay,
 His invocation thus begun:

Parent of light, all-seeing sun,
 Prolifick beam, whose rays dispense
 The various gifts of Providence,
 Accept our praise, our daily pray'r,
 Smile on our fields, and bless the year.

A cloud, who mock'd his grateful tongue,
 The day with sudden darkness hung;

With pride and envy swell'd, aloud
A voice thus thunder'd from the cloud :

Weak is this gaudy god of thine,
Whom I at will forbid to shine.
Shall I, nor vows, nor incense know?
Where praise is due, the praise bestow.

With fervent zeal the Persian mov'd
Thus the proud calumny reprov'd.
It was that god, who claims my pray'r,
Who gave thee birth, and rais'd thee there ;
When o'er his beams the veil is thrown,
Thy substance is but plainer shown.
A passing gale, a puff of wind,
Dispels thy thickest troops combin'd.

The gale arose ; the vapour tost
The sport of winds in air was lost,
The glorious orb the day refines.
Thus envy breaks, thus merit shines.

FABLE XXIX.

THE FOX AT THE POINT OF DEATH.

A FOX, in life's extreme decay,
Weak, sick, and faint, expiring lay ;
All appetite had left his maw,
And age disarm'd his mumbling jaw.
His num'rous race around him stand
To learn their dying sire's command :
He rais'd his head with whining moan,
And thus was heard the feeble tone :

Ah, sons ! from evil ways depart :
My crimes lie heavy on my heart.

See, see, the murder'd geese appear !
Why are those bleeding turkeys there ?
Why all around this cackling train,
Who haunt my ears for chickens slain ?

The hungry foxes round them star'd,
And for the promis'd feast prepar'd.

Where, Sir, is all this dainty cheer ?
Nor turkey, goose, nor hen is here.
These are the phantoms of your brain,
And your sons lick their lips in vain.

O gluttons ! says the drooping sire,
Restrain inordinate desire.
Your liqu'rish taste you shall deplore,
When peace of conscience is no more.
Does not the hound betray our pace,
And gins and guns destroy our race ?
Thieves dread the searching eye of pow'r,
And never feel the quiet hour.

Old age, which few of us shall know,
Now puts a period to my woe.
Would you true happiness attain ?
Let honesty your passions rein.
So live in credit and esteem,
And, the good name you lost, redeem.

The counsel's good, a fox replies,
Could we perform what you advise.
Think what our ancestors have done :
A line of thieves from son to son :
To us descends the long disgrace,
And infamy hath mark'd our race.
Though we, like harmless sheep, should feed
Honest in thought, in word, and deed,
Whatever hen-roost is decreas'd,
We shall be thought to share the feast.
The change shall never be believ'd :
A lost good name is ne'er retriev'd.

Nay, then, replies the feeble fox,
But hark ! I hear a hen that clocks :
Go, but be moderate in your food ;
A chicken too might do me good.

FABLE XXX.

THE SETTING-DOG AND THE PARTRIDGE.

THE ranging dog the stubble tries,
And searches ev'ry breeze that flies ;
The scent grows warm ; with cautious fear
He creeps, and points the covey near ;
The men, in silence, far behind,
Conscious of game, the net unbind.

A partridge, with experience wise,
The fraudulent preparation spies :
She mocks their toils, alarms her brood ;
The covey springs, and seeks the wood ;
But, ere her certain wing she tries,
Thus to the creeping spaniel cries :
Thou fawning slave to man's deceit,
Thou pimp of lux'ry, sneaking cheat,
Of thy whole species thou disgrace,
Dogs should disown thee of their race !
For if I judge their native parts,
They're born with open honest hearts ;
And, ere they serv'd man's wicked ends,
Were gen'rous foes, or real friends.

When thus the dog, with scornful smile :
Secure of wing, thou dar'st revile.
Clowns are to polish'd manners blind ;
How ignorant 's the rustick mind !

My worth sagacious courtiers see,
 And to preferment rise, like me.
 The thriving pimp, who beauty sets,
 Hath oft enhanc'd a nation's debts:
 Friend sets his friends without regard;
 And ministers his skill reward:
 Thus train'd by man, I learnt his ways,
 And growing favour feasts my days.

I might have guess'd, the partridge said,
 The place where you were train'd and fed:
 Servants are apt, and in a trice
 Ape to a hair their master's vice.
 You came from court, you say. Adieu,
 She said, and to the covey flew.

FABLE XXXI.

THE UNIVERSAL APPARITION.

A RAKE, by ev'ry passion rul'd,
 With ev'ry vice his youth had cool'd;
 Disease his tainted blood assails;
 His spirits droop, his vigour fails:
 With secret ills at home he pines,
 And, like infirm old age, declines.

As, twing'd with pain, he pensive sits,
 And raves, and prays, and swears by fits;
 A ghastly phantom, lean and wan,
 Before him rose, and thus began:

My name, perhaps, hath reach'd your ear;
 Attend, and be advis'd by Care:
 Nor love, nor honour, wealth, nor pow'r,
 Can give the heart a cheerful hour,

When health is lost. Be timely wise :
With health all taste of pleasure flies.

Thus said, the phantom disappears.
The wary counsel wak'd his fears:
He now from all excess abstains,
With physick purifies his veins ;
And, to procure a sober life,
Resolves to venture on a wife.

But now again the sprite ascends,
Where-e'er he walks his ear attends ;
Insinuates that beauty's frail,
That perseverance must prevail ;
With jealousies his brain inflames,
And whispers all her lovers' names.
In other hours, she represents
His household charge, his annual rents,
Increasing debts, perplexing duns,
And nothing for his younger sons.

Strait all his thoughts to gain he turns,
And with the thirst of lucre burns.
But when possess'd of fortune's store,
The spectre haunts him more and more ;
Sets want and misery in view,
Bold thieves, and all the murd'ring crew ;
Alarms him with eternal frights,
Infests his dream, or wakes his nights.
How shall he chase this hideous guest ?
Pow'r may perhaps protect his rest.
To pow'r he rose. Again the sprite
Besets him morning, noon, and night ;
Talks of ambition's tott'ring seat,
How envy persecutes the great,
Of rival hate, of treach'rous friends,
And what disgrace his fall attends.

The court he quits to fly from Care,
And seeks the peace of rural air :

His groves, his fields, amus'd his hours ;
He prun'd his trees, he rais'd his flow'rs.
But Care again his steps pursues,
Warns him of blasts, of blighting dews,
Of plund'ring insects, snails, and rains,
And droughts that starve the labour'd plains.
Abroad, at home, the spectre's there ;
In vain we seek to fly from Care.

At length he thus the ghost addrest :
Since thou must be my constant guest,
Be kind, and follow me no more ;
For Care by right should go before.

FABLE XXXII.

THE TWO OWLS AND THE SPARROW.

Two formal owls together sat,
Conferring thus in solemn chat :
How is the modern taste decay'd !
Where's the respect to wisdom paid ?
Our worth the Grecian sages knew ;
They gave our sires the honour due :
They weigh'd the dignity of fowls,
And pried into the depth of owls.
Athens, the seat of learned fame,
With gen'ral voice rever'd our name ;
On merit title was conferr'd,
And all ador'd th' Athenian bird.

Brother, you reason well, replies
The solemn mate, with half-shut eyes ;
Right. Athens was the seat of learning,
And truly wisdom is discerning.

Besides, on Pallas' helm we sit,
The type and ornament of wit :
But now, alas ! we're quite neglected,
And a pert sparrow's more respected.

A sparrow, who was lodg'd beside,
O'erhears them sooth each other's pride,
And thus he nimbly vents his heat :

Who meets a fool must find conceit.
I grant, you were at Athens grac'd,
And on Minerva's helm were plac'd ;
But ev'ry bird that wings the sky,
Except an owl, can tell you why.
From hence they taught their schools to know
How false we judge by outward show ;
That we should never looks esteem,
Since fools as wise as you might seem.
Would ye contempt and scorn avoid,
Let your vain glory be destroy'd :
Humble your arrogance of thought,
Pursue the ways by nature taught ;
So shall ye find delicious fare,
And grateful farmers praise your care ;
So shall sleek mice your chase reward,
And no keen cat find more regard.

FABLE XXXIII.

THE COURTIER AND PROTEUS.

W HENE'ER a courtier's out of place,
The country shelters his disgrace ;
Where, doom'd to exercise and health,
His house and gardens own his wealth.

He builds new schemes, in hope to gain
The plunder of another reign;
Like Philip's son, would fain be doing,
And sighs for other realms to ruin.

As one of these, without his wand,
Pensive along the winding strand,
Employ'd the solitary hour
In projects to regain his pow'r;
The waves in spreading circles ran,
Proteus arose, and thus began:

Came you from court? For in your mien
A self-important air is seen.

He frankly own'd his friends had trick'd him,
And how he fell his party's victim.

Know, says the god, by matchless skill
I change to ev'ry shape at will;
But yet, I'm told at court you see
Those who presume to rival me.

Thus said. A snake with hideous trail,
Proteus extends his scaly mail.

Know, says the man, though proud in place,
All courtiers are of reptile race.
Like you they take that dreadful form,
Bask in the sun, and fly the storm;
With malice hiss, with envy glote,
And for convenience change their coat;
With new-got lustre rear their head,
Though on a dunghill born and bred.

Sudden the god a lion stands;
He shakes his mane, he spurns the sands;
Now a fierce lynx, with fiery glare,
A wolf, an ass, a fox, a bear.

Had I ne'er liv'd at court, he cries,
Such transformation might surprise;
But there, in quest of daily game,
Each able courtier acts the same.

Wolves, lions, lynxes, while in place,
 Their friends and fellows are their chase.
 They play the bear's and fox's part;
 Now rob by force, now steal with art.
 They sometimes in the senate bray;
 Or, chang'd again to beasts of prey,
 Down from the lion to the ape,
 Practise the frauds of ev'ry shape.

So said. Upon the god he flies,
 In cords the struggling captive ties.
 Now Proteus, now, to truth compell'd,
 Speak, and confess thy art excell'd.
 Use strength, surprise, or what you will,
 The courtier finds evasions still:
 Not to be bound by any ties,
 And never forc'd to leave his lies.

FABLE XXXIV.

THE MASTIFFS.

THOSE who in quarrels interpose,
 Must often wipe a bloody nose.

A mastiff, of true english blood,
 Lov'd fighting better than his food.
 When dogs were snarling for a bone,
 He long'd to make the war his own,
 And often found, when two contend,
 To interpose obtain'd his end:
 He glory'd in his limping pace;
 The scars of honour seam'd his face;
 In ev'ry limb a gash appears.
 And frequent fights retrench'd his ears.

As, on a time, he heard from far
Two dogs engag'd in noisy war,
Away he scours, and lays about him,
Resolv'd no fray should be without him.

Forth from his yard a tanner flies,
And to the bold intruder cries:

A cudgel shall correct your manners.
Whence sprung this cursed hate to tanners?
While on my dog you vent your spite,
Sirrah! 'tis me you dare not bite.

To see the battle thus perplex'd,
With equal rage a butcher vex'd,
Hoarse-screaming from the circled crowd,
To the curs'd Mastiff cries aloud:

Both Hockley-hole and Mary-bone
The combats of my dog have known.
He ne'er, like bullies coward-hearted,
Attacks in publick, to be parted.
Think not, rash fool, to share his fame;
Be his the honour or the shame.

Thus said, they swore and rav'd like thunder:
Then dragg'd their fasten'd dogs asunder;
While clubs and kicks from ev'ry side
Rebounded from the mastiff's hide.

All reeking now with sweat and blood,
Awhile the parted warriors stood,
Then pour'd upon the meddling foe;
Who, worry'd, howl'd, and sprawl'd below.
He rose; and, limping from the fray,
By both sides mangled, sneak'd away.

FABLE XXXV.

THE BARLEY-MOW AND THE DUNGHILL.

How many saucy airs we meet
From Temple-bar to Aldgate street!
Proud rogues, who shar'd the south-sea prey,
And sprung like mushrooms in a day!
They think it mean to condescend
To know a brother or a friend;
They blush to hear their mother's name,
And by their pride expose their shame.

As cross his yard, at early day,
A careful farmer took his way,
He stop'd; and, leaning on his fork,
Observ'd the flail's incessant work.
In thought he measur'd all his store,
His geese, his hogs, he number'd o'er;
In fancy weigh'd the fleeces shorn,
And multiplied the next year's corn.

A barley-mow, which stood beside,
Thus to its musing master cried:

Say, good Sir, is it fit, or right,
To treat me with neglect and slight?
Me, who contribute to your cheer,
And raise your mirth with ale and beer!
Why thus insulted, thus disgrac'd,
And that vile dunghill near me plac'd?
Are those poor sweepings of a groom,
That filthy sight, that nauseous fume,
Meet objects here? Command it hence!
A thing so mean must give offence.

The humble Dunghill thus replied:
 Thy master hears and mocks thy pride:
 Insult not thus the meek and low;
 In me thy benefactor know;
 My warm assistance gave thee birth,
 Or thou hadst perish'd low in earth.
 But upstarts, to support their station,
 Cancel at once all obligation.

FABLE XXXVI.

PYTHAGORAS AND THE COUNTRYMAN.

PYTHAG'RAS rose at early dawn;
 By soaring meditation drawn,
 To breathe the fragrance of the day,
 Through flow'ry fields he took his way.
 In musing contemplation warm,
 His steps misled him to a farm,
 Where on the ladder's topmost round
 A peasant stood; the hammer's sound
 Shook the weak barn. Say, friend, what care
 Calls for thy honest labour there?

'The clown with surly voice replies,
 Vengeance aloud for justice cries.
 This kite, by daily rapine fed,
 My hens' annoy, my turkeys' dread,
 At length his forfeit life hath paid;
 See on the wall his wings display'd,
 Here nail'd, a terror to his kind,
 My fowls shall future safety find;
 My yard the thriving poultry feed,
 And my barn's refuse fat the breed.

Friend, says the sage, the doom is wise :
 For publick good the murd'rer dies.
 But if these tyrants of the air
 Demand a sentence so severe,
 Think how the glutton man devours ;
 What bloody feasts regale his hours !
 O impudence of pow'r and might ,
 Thus to condemn a hawk or kite,
 When thou perhaps, carniv'rous sinner,
 Hadst pullets yesterday for dinner !

Hold, cried the clown, with passion heated,
 Shall kites and men alike be treated ?
 When heav'n the world with creatures stor'd,
 Man was ordain'd their sov'reign lord.

Thus tyrants boast, the sage replied ,
 Whose murders spring from pow'r and pride.
 Own then this manlike kite is slain
 Thy greater lux'ry to sustain ;
 For « Petty rogues submit to fate,
 « That great ones may enjoy their state. (1) »

FABLE XXXVII.

THE FARMER'S WIFE AND THE RAVEN.

WHY are those tears ? Why droops your head ?
 Is then your other husband dead ?
 Or does a worse disgrace betide ?
 Hath no one since his death applied ?
 Alas ! you know the cause too well :
 The salt is spilt, to me it fell.

(1) Garth's dispensary.

Then to contribute to my loss,
 My knife and fork were laid across ;
 On friday too ! the day I dread ;
 Would I were safe at home in bed !
 Last night (I vow to heav'n 'tis true)
 Bounce from the fire a coffin flew ;
 Next post some fatal nêws shall tell,
 God send my Cornish friends be well !

Unhappy widow, cease thy tears,
 Nor feel affliction in thy fears ;
 Let not thy stomach be suspended ;
 Eat now, and weep when dinner's ended ;
 And, when the butler clears the table,
 For thy desert I'll read my fable.

Betwixt her swagging pannier's load
 A farmer's wife to market rode,
 And, jogging on, with thoughtful care
 Summ'd up the profits of her ware ;
 When, starting from her silver dream,
 Thus far and wide was heard her scream.

That raven on yon left-hand oak
 (Curse on his ill-betiding croak)
 Bodes me no good. No more she said,
 When poor blind Ball, with stumbling tread,
 Fell prone ; o'erturn'd the pannier lay,
 And her mash'd eggs bestrew'd the way.

She, sprawling in the yellow road,
 Rail'd, swore, and curs'd. Thou croaking toad,
 A murrain take thy whoreson throat !
 I knew misfortune in the note.

Dame, quoth the Raven, spare your oaths,
 Unclench your fist, and wipe your cloaths.
 But why on me those curses thrown ?
 Goody, the fault was all your own ;

For had you laid this brittle ware
On Dun, the old sure-footed mare,
Though all the ravens of the hundred,
With croaking had your tongue out-thunder'd,
Sure-footed Dun had kept her legs,
And you, good woman, sav'd your eggs.

FABLE XXXVIII.

THE TURKEY AND THE ANT.

IN other men we faults can spy,
And blame the mote that dims their eye,
Each little speck and blemish find,
To our own stronger errors blind.

A turkey, tir'd of common food,
Forsook the barn, and sought the wood ;
Behind her ran her infant train,
Collecting here and there a grain.
Draw near, my birds, the mother cries,
This hill delicious fare supplies ;
Behold, the busy negro race,
See, millions blacken all the place !
Fear not : like me with freedom eat ;
An ant is most delightful meat.
How bless'd, how envy'd were our life,
Could we but 'scape the poult'rer's knife !
But man, curs'd man, on turkeys preys,
And Christmas shortens all our days :
Sometimes with oysters we combine,
Sometimes assist the sav'ry chine ;

From the low peasant to the lord,
 The turkey smokes on ev'ry board.
 Sure men for gluttony are curs'd,
 Of the sev'n deadly sins the worst.

An ant, who climb'd beyond her reach,
 Thus answer'd from the neighb'ring beech :
 Ere you remark another's sin,
 Bid thy own conscience look within :
 Controul thy more voracious bill,
 Nor for a breakfast nations kill.

FABLE XXXIX.

THE FATHER AND JUPITER.

THE man to Jove his suit preferr'd ;
 He begg'd a wife. His pray'r was heard.
 Jove wonder'd at his bold addressing :
 For how precarious is the blessing !

A wife he takes. And now for heirs
 Again he worries heav'n with pray'rs.
 Jove nods assent. Two hopeful boys
 And a fine girl reward his joys.

Now more solicitous he grew,
 And set their future lives in view ;
 He saw that all respect and duty
 Were paid to wealth, to pow'r, and beauty.

Once more he cries. Accept my pray'r :
 Make my lov'd progeny thy care.
 Let my first hope, my fav'rite boy,
 All fortune's richest gifts enjoy.
 My next with strong ambition fire :
 May favour teach him to aspire ;

Till he the step of pow'r ascend,
And courtiers to their idol bend.
With ev'ry grace, with ev'ry charm,
My daughter's perfect features arm.
If heav'n approve, a father's blest,
Jove smiles, and grants his full request.

The first, a miser at the heart,
Studious of ev'ry griping art,
Heaps hoards on hoards with anxious pain,
And all his life devotes to gain.
He feels no joy, his cares increase,
He neither wakes nor sleeps in peace;
In fancy'd want (a wretch complete)
He starves, and yet he dares not eat.

The next to sudden honours grew:
The thriving art of courts he knew:
He reach'd the height of pow'r and place;
Then fell the victim of disgrace.
Beauty with early bloom supplies
His daughter's cheek, and points her eyes.
The vain coquette each suit disdains,
And glories in her lover's pains.
With age she fades, each lover flies,
Contemn'd, forlorn, she pines and dies.

When Jove the father's grief survey'd,
And heard him heav'n and fate upbraid,
Thus spoke the God: By outward show,
Men judge of happiness and woe:
Shall ignorance of good and ill
Dare to direct th' eternal will?
Seek virtue; and of that possess,
To Providence resign the rest.

FABLE XL.

THE TWO MONKEYS.

THE learned, full of inward pride,
 The fops of outward show deride ;
 The fop, with learning at defiance,
 Scoffs at the pedant and the science :
 The Don, a formal, solemn strutter,
 Despises Monsieur's airs and flutter ;
 While Monsieur mocks the formal fool,
 Who looks, and speaks, and walks by rule.
 Britain, a medley of the twain,
 As pert as France, as grave as Spain,
 In fancy wiser than the rest,
 Laughs at them both, of both the jest.
 Is not the Poet's chiming close
 Censur'd by all the sons of prose ?
 While bards of quick imagination
 Despise the sleepy prose narration.
 Men laugh at apes, they men contemn ;
 For what are we but apes to them ?

Two monkeys went to Southwark fair,
 No criticks had a sorer air :
 They forc'd their way through draggled folks,
 Who gap'd to catch Jack-pudding's jokes ;
 Then took their tickets for the show,
 And got by chance the foremost row.
 To see their grave observing face
 Provok'd a laugh through all the place.

Brother, says pug, and turn'd his head,
 The rabble's monstrously ill bred.

Now through the booth loud hisses ran,
Nor ended till the show began.
The tumbler whirls the flip-flap round,
With somersets he shakes the ground ;
The cord beneath the dancer springs :
Aloft in air the vaulter swings ;
Distorted now, now prone depends,
Now through his twisted arms ascends :
The crowd, in wonder and delight,
With clapping hands applaud the sight.

With smiles, quoth pug : If pranks like these
The giant apes of reason please,
How would they wonder at our arts !
They must adore us for our parts.
High on the twig I've seen you cling ;
Play, twist and turn, in airy ring :
How can those clumsy things, like me,
Fly with a bound from tree to tree ?
But yet, by this applause, we find
These emulators of our kind
Discern our worth, our parts regard,
Who our mean mimicks thus reward.

Brother, the grinning mate replies,
In this I grant that man is wise.
While good example they pursue,
We must allow some praise is due ;
But, when they strain beyond their guide,
I laugh to scorn the mimick pride.
For how fantastick is the sight,
To meet men always bolt upright,
Because we sometimes walk on two ?
I hate the imitating crew.

FABLE XLI.

THE OWL AND THE FARMER.

AN owl of grave deport and mien,
Who, like the Turk, was seldom seen,
Within a barn had chose his station,
As fit for prey and contemplation.
Upon a beam aloft he sits,
And nods, and seems to think by fits :
So have I seen a man of news,
Or post-boy, or gazette peruse ;
Smoke, nod, and talk with voice profound,
And fix the fate of Europe round.

Sheaves pil'd on sheaves hid all the floor :
At dawn of morn, to view his store
The farmer came. The hooting guest
His self-importance thus exprest :

Reason in man is mere pretence :
How weak, how shallow is his sense !
To treat with scorn the bird of night,
Declares his folly or his spite.
Then, too, how partial is his praise !
The lark's, the linnet's chirping lays
To his ill-judging ears are fine ;
And nightingales are all divine.
But the more knowing feather'd race
See wisdom stamp'd upon my face.
Whene'er to visit light I deign,
What flocks of fowl compose my train !
Like slaves, they crowd my flight behind,
And own me of superior kind.

The farmer laugh'd, and thus replied :
 Thou dull important lump of pride,
 Dar'st thou with that harsh grating tongue
 Depreciate birds of warbling song ?
 Indulge thy spleen. Know, men and fowl
 Regard thee, as thou art, an owl.
 Besides, proud blockhead, be not vain
 Of what thou call'st thy slaves and train.
 Few follow wisdom or her rules ;
 Fools in derision follow fools.

FABLE XLII.

THE JUGGLERS.

A JUGGLER long through all the town
 Had rais'd his fortune and renown ;
 You'd think (so far his art transcends)
 The devil at his fingers' ends.

Vice heard his fame, she read his bill ;
 Convinc'd of his inferior skill,
 She sought his booth, and from the crowd
 Defied the man of art aloud.

Is this then he so fam'd for slight ?
 Can this slow bungler cheat your sight ?
 Dares he with me dispute the prize ?
 I leave it to impartial eyes.

Provok'd, the juggler cried : 'Tis done :
 In science I submit to none.

Thus said. The cups and balls he play'd ;
 By turns, this here, that there, convey'd.
 The cards, obedient to his words,
 Are by a fillip turn'd to birds.
 His little boxes change the grain,
 Trick after trick deludes the train.

He shakes his bag, he shews all fair;
 His fingers spread, and nothing there;
 Then bids it rain with show'rs of gold,
 And now his iv'ry eggs are told.
 But, when from thence the hen he draws,
 Amaz'd spectators hum applause.

Vice now stept forth, and took the place
 With all the forms of his grimace.

This magick looking-glass, she cries,
 (There, hand it round) will charm your eyes.
 Each eager eye the sight desir'd,
 And ev'ry man himself admir'd.

Next, to a senator addressing:
 See this bank-note; observe the blessing.
 Breathe on the bill. Heigh, pass! 'Tis gone.
 Upon his lips a padlock shown:
 A second puff the magick broke;
 The padlock vanish'd and he spoke.
 Twelve bottles rang'd upon the board,
 All full, with heady liquor stor'd,
 By clean conveyance disappear,
 And now two bloody swords are there.

A purse she to a thief expos'd;
 At once his ready fingers clos'd:
 He opes his fist, the treasure's fled;
 He sees a halter in its stead.

She bids ambition hold a wand;
 He grasps a hatchet in his hand.

A box of charity she shows;
 Blow here; and a church-warden blows.
 'Tis vanish'd with conveyance neat,
 And on the table smokes a treat.

She shakes the dice, the board she knocks,
 And from all pockets fills her box.

She next a meagre rake address:
 This picture see; her shape, her breast;

What youth, and what inviting eyes !
Hold her, and have her. With surprise,
His hand expos'd a box of pills,
And a loud laugh proclaim'd his ills.

A counter, in a miser's hand,
Grew twenty guineas at command :
She bids his heir the sum retain,
And 'tis a counter now again.

A guinea with her touch you see
Take ev'ry shape but charity ;
And not one thing you saw, or drew,
But chang'd from what was first in view.

The juggler, now in grief of heart,
With this submission own'd her art.
Can I such matchless slight withstand ?
How practice hath improv'd your hand !
But now and then I cheat the throng,
You ev'ry day, and all day long.

FABLE XLIII.

THE COUNCIL OF HORSES.

UPON a time a neighing steed,
Who graz'd among a num'rous breed,
With mutiny had fir'd the train,
And spread dissention through the plain.
On matters that concern'd the state
The council met in grand debate.
A colt, whose eye-balls flam'd with ire,
Elate with strength and youthful fire,
In haste stept forth before the rest,
And thus the list'ning throng address :
Good gods ! how abject is our race,
Condemn'd to slav'ry and disgrace !

Shall we our servitude retain,
Because our sires have borne the chain ?
Consider, friends, your strength and might :
'Tis conquest to assert your right.
How cumb'rous is the gilded coach !
The pride of man is our reproach.
Were we design'd for daily toil,
To drag the plough-share through the soil ?
To sweat in harness through the road,
To groan beneath the carrier's load ?
How feeble are the two legg'd kind !
What force is in our nerves combin'd !
Shall then our nobler jaws submit
To foam and champ the galling bit ?
Shall haughty man my back bestride ?
Shall the sharp spur provoke my side ?
Forbid it heav'ns ! Reject the rein ;
Your shame, your infamy disdain.
Let him the lion first controul,
And still the tyger's famish'd growl.
Let us, like them, our freedom claim,
And make him tremble at our name.

A gen'ral nod approv'd the cause,
And all the circle neigh'd applause.

When, lo ! with grave and solemn pace,
A steed advanc'd before the race,
With age and long experience wise ;
Around he cast his thoughtful eyes,
And, to the murmurs of the train,
Thus spoke the Nestor of the plain :

When I had health and strength like you,
The toils of servitude I knew.
Now grateful man rewards my pains,
And gives me all these wide domains.
At will I crop the year's increase ;
My latter life is rest and peace.

I grant to man we lend our pains,
And aid him to correct the plains :
But doth not he divide the care,
Through all the labours of the year?
How many thousand structures rise
To fence us from inclement skies!
For us he bears the sultry day,
And stores up all our winter's hay.
He sows, he reaps the harvest's gain ;
We share the toil and share the grain.
Since ev'ry creature was decreed
To aid each other's mutual need,
Appease your discontented mind,
And act the part by heav'n assign'd.

The tumult ceas'd. The colt submitted,
And, like his ancestors, was bitted.

FABLE XLIV.

THE HOUND AND THE HUNTSMAN.

IMPERTINENCE at first is borne
With heedless slight, or smiles of scorn ;
Teaz'd into wrath, what patience bears
The noisy fool who perseveres ?

The morning wakes, the huntsman sounds.
At once rush forth the joyful hounds.
They seek the wood with eager pace,
Thro' bush, thro' bri'r, explore the chace.
Now scatter'd wide they try the plain,
And snuff the dewy turf in vain.
What care, what industry, what pains !
What universal silence reigns !

Ringwood, a dog of little fame,
 Young, pert, and ignorant of game,
 At once displays his babbling throat ;
 The pack, regardless of the note,
 Pursue the scent ; with louder strain
 He still persists to vex the train.

The huntsman to the clamour flies ;
 The smacking lash he smartly plies ;
 His ribs all welk'd, with howling tone
 The puppy thus express'd his moan :
 I know the musick of my tongue
 Long since the pack with envy stung.
 What will not spite ? These bitter smarts
 I owe to my superior parts.

When puppies prate, the huntsman cried,
 They show both ignorance and pride :
 Fools may our scorn, not envy raise,
 For envy is a kind of praise.
 Had not thy forward noisy tongue
 Proclaim'd thee always in the wrong.
 Thou might'st have mingled with the rest,
 And ne'er thy foolish nose confest.
 But fools, to talking ever prone,
 Are sure to make their follies known.

F A B L E X L V.

THE POET AND THE ROSE.

I HATE the man who builds his name
 On ruins of another's fame.
 Thus prudes, by characters o'erthrown,
 Imagine that they raise their own.

Thus scribblers, covetous of praise,
Think slander can transplant the bays.
Beauties and bards have equal pride,
With both all riva's are decried.
Who praises Lesbia's eyes and feature
Must call her sister awkward creature ;
For the kind flatt'ry's sure to charm,
When we some other nymph disarm.

As in the cool of early day
A poet sought the sweets of May,
The garden's fragrant breath ascends,
And ev'ry stalk with odour bends,
A rose he pluck'd, he gaz'd, admir'd,
Thus singing, as the muse inspir'd :

Go, rose, my Chloe's bosom grace :
How happy should I prove,
Might I supply that envied place
With never-fading love !
There, phoenix-like, beneath her eye,
Involv'd in fragrance, burn and die !

Know, hapless flow'r, that thou shalt find
More fragrant roses there ;
I see thy with'ring head reclin'd
With envy and despair !
One common fate we both must prove ;
You die with envy, I with love.

Spare your comparisons, replied
An angry rose, who grew beside.
Of all mankind you should not flout us ;
What can a poet do without us !
In ev'ry love-song roses bloom ;
We lend you colour and perfume ;

Does it to Chloe's charms conduce,
 To found her praise on our abuse?
 Must we, to flatter her, be made
 To wither, envy, pine and fade?

FABLE XLVI.

THE CUR, THE HORSE, AND THE SHEPHERD'S DOG.

THE lad of all-sufficient merit,
 With modesty ne'er damps his spirit;
 Presuming on his own deserts,
 On all alike his tongue exerts;
 His noisy jokes at random throws,
 And pertly spatters friends and foes;
 In wit and war the bully race
 Contribute to their own disgrace.
 Too late the forward youth shall find
 That jokes are sometimes paid in kind;
 Or, if they canker in the breast,
 He makes a foe, who makes a jest.

A village-cur, of snappish race,
 The pertest puppy of the place,
 Imagin'd that his treble throat
 Was bless'd with musick's sweetest note;
 In the mid-road he basking lay,
 The yelping nuisance of the way;
 For not a creature pass'd along
 But had a sample of his song.

Soon as the trotting steed he hears,
 He starts, he cocks his dapper ears;
 Away he scours, assaults his hoof;
 Now near him snarls, now barks aloof;

With shrill impertinence attends ;
Nor leaves him till the village ends.

It chanc'd upon his evil day,
A pad came pacing down the way :
The cur, with never-ceasing tongue,
Upon the passing trav'ler sprung.
The horse, from scorn provok'd to ire,
Flung backward : rolling in the mire
The puppy howl'd, and bleeding lay ;
The pad in peace pursu'd his way.

A shepherd's dog, who saw the deed,
Detesting the vexatious breed,
Bespoke him thus : When coxcombs prate,
They kindle wrath, contempt, or hate ;
Thy teazing tongue had judgment tied,
Thou hadst not, like a puppy, died.

FABLE XLVII.

THE COURT OF DEATH.

DEATH, on a solemn night of state,
In all his pomp of terror sate :
Th' attendants of his gloomy reign,
Diseases dire, a ghastly train,
Crowd the vast court. With hollow tone,
A voice thus thunder'd from the throne :

This night our minister we name,
Let ev'ry servant speak his claim ;
Merit shall bear this ebon wand.
All, at the word, stretch'd forth their hand.

Fever, with burning heat possess,
Advanc'd, and for the wand address :

I to the weekly bil's appeal,
Let those express my fervent zeal ;

On ev'ry slight occasion near,
With violence I persevere.

Next Gout appears with limping pace,
Pleads how he shifts from place to place:
From head to foot how swift he flies,
And ev'ry joint and sinew plies,
Still working when he seems supprest,
A most tenacious stubborn guest.

A haggard spectre from the crew
Crawls forth, and thus asserts his due:
'Tis I who taint the sweetest joy,
And in the shape of Love destroy:
My shanks, sunk eyes, and noseless face,
Prove my pretension to the place.

Stone urg'd his ever-growing force:
And next, Consumption's meagre corse,
With feeble voice, that scarce was heard,
Broke with short coughs, his suit preferr'd;
Let none object my ling'ring way,
I gain, like Fabius, by delay;
Fatigue and weaken ev'ry foe
By long attack, secure, though slow.

Plague represents his rapid pow'r,
Who thinn'd a nation in an hour.

All spoke their claim, and hop'd the wand.
Now expectation hush'd the band;
When thus the monarch from the throne:

Merit was ever modest known;
What, no Physician speak his right!
None here! but fees their toils requite.
Let then Intemp'rance take the wand,
Who fills with gold their zealous hand:
You, Fever, Gout, and all the rest,
Whom wary men, as foes, detest,
Forego your claim; no more pretend:
Intemp'rance is esteem'd a friend;

He shares their mirth, their social joys,
 And, as a courted guest, destroys:
 The charge on him must justly fall,
 Who finds employment for you all.

FABLE XLVIII.

THE GARDENER AND THE HOG.

A GARD'NER, of peculiar taste,
 On a young hog his favour plac'd,
 Who fed not with the common herd;
 His tray was to the hall preferr'd.
 He wallow'd underneath the board,
 Or in his master's chamber snor'd;
 Who fondly stroak'd him ev'ry day,
 And taught him all the puppy's play.
 Where'er he went, the grunting friend
 Ne'er fail'd his pleasure to attend.

As on a time the loying pair
 Walk'd forth to tend the garden's care,
 The master thus address'd the swine:

My house, my garden, all is thine.
 On turnips feast whene'er you please,
 And riot in my beans and pease;

If the potatoe's taste delights,
 Or the red-carrot's sweet invites,
 Indulge thy morn and ev'ning hours,
 But let due care regard my flow'rs:

My tulips are my garden's pride;
 What vast expence those beds supplied!

The hog, by chance, one morning roam'd
 Where with new ale the vessels foam'd.
 He munches now the steaming grains,
 Now with full swill the liquor drains,

Intoxicating fumes arise;
 He reels, he rolls his winking eyes.
 Then stagg'ring thro' the garden sconrs,
 And treads down painted ranks of flow'rs.
 With delving snout he turns the soil,
 And cools his palate with the spoil.

The master came, the ruin spied,
 Villain suspend thy rage, he cried.
 Hast thou, thou most ungrateful sot,
 My charge, my only charge forgot?
 What, all my flow'rs! no more he said,
 But gaz'd and sigh'd, and hung his head.

The hog with stutt'ring speech returns:
 Explain, Sir, why your anger burns.
 See there, untouch'd, your tulips strown?
 For I devour'd the roots alone.

At this the gard'ner's passion grows;
 From oaths and threats he fell to blows.
 The stubborn brute the blows sustains;
 Assaults his leg, and tears the veins.

Ah! foolish swain, too late you find
 That sties were for such friends design'd!
 Homeward he limps with painful pace,
 Reflecting thus on past disgrace.
 Who cherishes a brutal mate,
 Shall mourn the folly soon or late.

F A B L E X L I X.

THE MAN AND THE FLEA.

WHETHER on earth, in air, or main,
 Sure ev'ry thing alive is vain!

Does not the hawk all fowls survey,
 As destin'd only for his prey?

And do not tyrants, prouder things,
Think men were born for slaves to kings?

When the crab views the pearly strands,
Or Tagus bright with golden sands,
Or crawls beside the coral grove,
And hears the ocean roll above;
Nature is too profuse, says he,
Who gave all these to pleasure me!

When bord'ring pinks and roses bloom,
And ev'ry garden breathes perfume;
When peaches glow with sunny dies;
Like Laura's cheek, when blushes rise;
When with huge figs the branches bend,
When clusters from the vine depend;
The snail looks round on flow'r and tree,
And cries, All these were made for me!

What dignity's in human nature!
Says man, the most conceited creature,
As from a cliff he cast his eye,
And view'd the sea and arched sky;
The sun was sunk beneath the main;
The moon, and all the starry train,
Hung the vast vault of heav'n. The man
His contemplation thus began:

When I behold this glorious show,
And the wide wat'ry world below,
The scaly people of the main,
The beasts that range the wood or plain,
The wing'd inhabitants of air,
The day, the night, the various year,
And know all these by heav'n design'd
As gifts to pleasure human kind;
I cannot raise my worth too high;
Of what vast consequence am I!

Not of th' importance you suppose,
Replies a flea upon his nose.

Be humble, learn thyself to scan;
 Know, pride was never made for man.
 'Tis vanity that swells thy mind.
 What heav'n and earth for thee design'd!
 For thee, made only for our need,
 That more important fleas might feed.

FABLE L.

THE HARE AND MANY FRIENDS.

FRIENDSHIP, like love, is but a name,
 Unless to one you stint the flame.
 The child whom many fathers share,
 Hath seldom known a father's care.
 'Tis thus in friendships; who depend
 On many, rarely find a friend.

A hare, who in a civil way,
 Complied with ev'ry thing, like GAY,
 Was known by all the bestial train
 Who haunt the wood or graze the plain.
 Her care was never to offend;
 And ev'ry creature was her friend.

As forth she went at early dawn,
 To taste the dew-besprinkled lawn,
 Behind she hears the hunter's cries,
 And from the deep-mouth'd thunder flies.
 She starts, she stops, she pants for breath;
 She hears the near advance of death;
 She doubles to mislead the hound,
 And measures back her mazy round;
 Till, fainting in the publick way,
 Half dead with fear she gasping lay.

What transport in her bosom grew,
When first the horse appear'd in view!

Let me, says she, your back ascend,
And owe my safety to a friend.
You know my feet betray my flight:
To friendship ev'ry burden's light.

The horse replied, poor honest puss,
It grieves my heart to see thee thus.
Be comforted, relief is near;
For all your friends are in the rear.

She next the stately bull implor'd;
And thus replied the mighty lord:
Since ev'ry beast alive can tell
That I sincerely wish you well,
I may, without offence, pretend
To take the freedom of a friend:
Love calls me hence; a fav'rite cow
Expects me near yon barley-mow;
And when a lady's in the case,
You know all other things give place.
To leave you thus might seem unkind;
But see, the goat is just behind.

The goat remark'd her pulse was high,
Her languid head, her heavy eye.
My back, says he, may do you harm;
The sheep's at hand, and wool is warm.

The sheep was feeble, and complain'd
His sides a load of wool sustain'd:
Said he was slow, confess'd his fears;
For hounds eat sheep as well as hares.

She now the trotting calf address'd,
To save from death a friend distress'd.

Shall I, says he, of tender age,
In this important care engage?
Older and abler pass'd you by;
How strong are those! how weak am I!

Should I presume to bear you hence,
Those friends of mine may take offence.
Excuse me then ; you know my heart :
But dearest friends, alas ! must part.
How shall we all lament ! Adieu :
For see the hounds are just in view.

END OF PART THE FIRST.

FABLES.

PART THE SECOND.

ADVERTISEMENT.

These fables were finished by Mr. Gay, and intended for the press, a short time before his death; when they were left, with his other papers, to the care of his noble friend and patron the duke of Queensberry. His Grace has accordingly committed them to the press, and they were printed from the originals in the author's own hand-writing. We hope they will please equally with his former fables, though mostly on subjects of a graver and more political turn. They will certainly show him to have been, what he esteemed the best character, « a man of a truly honest heart, and « a sincere lover of his country. »

FABLE I.

THE DOG AND THE FOX.

To a Lawyer.

I Know you lawyers can, with ease,
Twist words and meanings as you please ;
That language, by your skill made pliant,
Will bend to favour ev'ry client ;
That 'tis the fee directs the sense,
To make out either side's pretence.
When you peruse the clearest case,
You see it with a double face :

For scepticism is your profession ;
 You hold there's doubt in all expression.

Hence is the bar with fees supplied,
 Hence eloquence takes either side.
 Your hand would have but paltry gleanings,
 Could ev'ry man express his meaning.
 Who dares presume to pen a deed,
 Unless you previously are fee'd?
 'Tis drawn ; and to augment the cost,
 In dull prolixity engrost.

And now we're well secur'd by law,
 Till the next brother find a flaw.

Read o'er a will. Was't ever known,
 But you could make the will your own?
 For when you read, 'tis with intent
 To find out meanings never meant.
 Since things are thus, *se defendendo*,
 I bar fallacious innuendo.

Sagacious Porta's skill could trace
 Some beast or bird in ev'ry face :
 The head, the eye, the nose's shape,
 Prov'd this an owl, and that an ape :
 When, in the sketches thus design'd,
 Resemblance brings some friend to mind,
 You show the piece, and give the hint,
 And find each feature in the print ;
 So monstrous like the portrait's found,
 All know it, and the laugh goes round.
 Like him I draw from gen'ral nature ;
 Is't I or you then fix the satire?

So, Sir, I beg you spare your pains
 In making comments on my strains.
 All private slander I detest,
 I judge not of my neighbour's breast :
 Party and prejudice I hate,
 And write no libels on the state.

Shall not my Fable censure vice,
Because a knave is over nice?
And lest the guilty hear and dread,
Shall not the deca ogue be read?
If I lash vice in gen'ral fiction,
Is't I apply, or self-conviction?
Brutes are my theme. Am I to blame,
If men in morals are the same?
I no man call an ape or ass;
'Tis his own conscience holds the glass.
Thus void of all offence I write:
Who claims the fable, knows his right.

A shepherd's dog, unskill'd in sports,
Pick'd up acquaintance of all sorts:
Among the rest a fox he knew;
By frequent chat their friendship grew.

Says Reynard, 'Tis a cruel case,
That man should stigmatize our race.
No doubt, among us rogues you find,
As among dogs and human kind,
And yet, unknown to me and you,
There may be honest men and true.
Thus slander tries whate'er it can,
To put us on the foot with man.
Let my own actions recommend;
No prejudice can blind a friend:
You know me free from all disguise;
My honour as my life I prize.

By talk like this, from all mistrust
The dog was cur'd, and thought him just.

As on a time the fox held forth
On conscience, honesty, and worth,
Sudden he stopt; he cock'd his ear;
Low dropt his brushy tail with fear.

Bless us! the hunters are abroad.
What's ail that clatter on the road?

Hold, says the dog, we're safe from harm,
 'Twas nothing but a false alarm;
 At yonder town 'tis market-day;
 Some farmer's wife is on the way;
 'Tis so, I know her pye-ball'd mare,
 Dame Dobbins with her poultry ware.

Reynard grew huff: Says he, This sneer,
 From you I little thought to hear;
 Your meaning in your looks I see.
 Pray what's dame Dobbins, friend, to me?
 Did I e'er make her poultry thinner?
 Prove that I owe the dame a dinner.

Friend, quoth the cur, I meant no harm:
 Then why so captious? why so warm?
 My words, in common acceptation,
 Could never give this provocation.
 No lamb, for aught I ever knew,
 May be more innocent than you.
 At this, gall'd Reynard winch'd and swore
 Such language ne'er was giv'n before.
 What's lamb to me? The saucy hint
 Shews me, base knave, which way you squint.
 If t'other night your master lost
 Three lambs, am I to pay the cost?
 Your vile reflections would imply
 That I'm the thief. You dog, you lie.
 Thou knave, thou fool, the dog replied,
 The name is just, take either side;
 Thy guilt these applications speak:
 Sirrah, 'tis conscience makes you squeak.

So saying, on the fox he flies.
 The self-convicted felon dies.

FABLE II.

THE VULTURE, THE SPARROW, AND OTHER BIRDS.

To a friend in the country.

ERE I begin, I must premise
Our ministers are good and wise;
So, though malicious tongues apply,
Pray, what care they, or what care I?
If I am free with courts; he't known,
I ne'er presume to mean our own.
If general morals seem to joke
On ministers, and such like folk,
A captious fool may take offence;
What then? He knows his own pretence.
I meddle with no state-affairs,
But spare my jest to save my ears.
Our present schemes are too profound
For Machiavel himself to sound:
To censure 'em I've no pretension;
I own they're past my comprehension.

You say your brother wants a place,
('Tis many a younger brother's case,)
And that he very soon intends
To ply the court, and teaze his friends.
If there his merits chance to find
A patriot of an open mind,
Whose constant actions prove him just
To both a king's and people's trust;
May he, with grat tude, attend,
And owe his rise to such a friend.

You praise his parts for bus'ness fit,
His learning, probity, and wit;
But those alone will never do,
Unless his patron have 'em too.
I've heard of times, (pray God defend us,
We're not so good but he can mend us)
When wicked ministers have trod
On kings and people, law and God;
With arrogance they girt the throne,
And knew no int'rest but their own.
Then virtue, from preferment barr'd,
Gets nothing but its own reward.
A gang of petty knaves attend 'em,
With proper parts to recommend 'em.
Then if his patron burn with lust,
The first in favour's pimp the first.
His doors are never clos'd to spies,
Who cheer his heart with double lies;
They flatter him. his foes defame,
So lull the pangs of guilt and shame.
If schemes of lucre haunt his brain,
Projectors swell his greedy train:
Vile brokers ply his private ear
With jobs of plunder for the year;
All consciences must bend and ply;
You must vote on, and not know why:
Through thick and thin you must go on;
One scruple, and your place is gone.
Since plagues like these have curs'd a land,
And fav'rites cannot always stand;
Good courtiers should for change be ready,
And not have principles too steady:
For should a knave engross the pow'r,
(God shield the realm from that sad hour)
He must have rogues, or slavish fools;
For what's a knave without his tools?

Wherever those a people drain,
And strut with infamy and gain;
I envy not their guilt and state,
And scorn to share the publick hate.
Let their own servile creatures rise,
By screening fraud and venting lies:
Give me, kind heav'n, a private station,
A mind serene for contemplation:
Title and profit I resign;
The post of honour shall be mine.
My fable read, their merits view,
Then herd who will with such a crew.

In days of yore, (my cautious rhimes
Always except the present times)
A greedy vulture, skill'd in game,
Inur'd to guilt, unaw'd by shame,
Approach'd the throne in evil hour,
And step by step intrudes to pow'r:
When at the royal eagle's ear,
He longs to ease the monarch's care.
The monarch grants. With pride elate,
Behold him minister of state!
Around him throng the feather'd rout;
Friends must be serv'd, and some must out.
Each thinks his own the best pretension;
This asks a place, and that a pension;
The nightingale was set aside;
A forward daw his room supplied.

This bird, says he, for bus'ness fit,
Hath both sagacity and wit.
With all his turns, and shifts, and tricks,
He's docile, and at nothing sticks.
Then with his neighbours one so free
At all times will connive at me.
The hawk had due distinction shown,
For parts and talents like his own.

Thousands of hireling cocks attend him,
As blust'ring bullies to defend him.

At once the ravens were discarded,
And magpies with their posts rewarded.

Those fowls of omen I detest,
That pry into another's nest:
State lies must lose all good intent;
For they foresee and croak th' event.
My friends ne'er think, but talk by rote,
Speak what they're taught, and so too vote.

When rogues like these, a sparrow cries,
To honours and employments rise,
I court no favour, ask no place,
For such preferment is disgrace.
Within my thatch'd retreat I find
(What these ne'er feel) true peace of mind.

FABLE III.

THE BABOON AND THE POULTRY.

To a levee-hunter.

WE frequently misplace esteem,
By judging men by what they seem.
To birth, wealth, pow'r, we should allow
Precedence, and our lowest bow.
In that is due distinction shown:
Esteem is virtue's right alone.

With partial eye we're apt to see
The man of noble pedigree;
We're prepossess, my lord inherits,
In some degree his grandsire's merits;
For those we find upon record;
But find him nothing but my lord.

When we with superficial view
Gaze on the rich, we're dazzled too.
We know that wealth, well understood,
Hath frequent pow'r of doing good:
Then fancy that the thing is done,
As if the pow'r and will were one.
Thus oft the cheated crowd adore
The thriving knaves that keep 'em poor.

The cringing train of pow'r survey:
What creatures are so low as they!
With what obsequiousness they bend!
To what vile actions condescend!
Their rise is on their meanness built,
And flatt'ry is their smallest guilt.
What homage, rev'rence, adoration,
In ev'ry age, in ev'ry nation,
Have sycophants to pow'r address'd!
No matter who the pow'r possess'd.
Let Ministers be what they will,
You find their levees always fill.
Ev'n those who have perplex'd a state,
Whose actions claim'd contempt and hate,
Had wretches to applaud their schemes,
Though more absurd than madmen's dreams.
When barb'rous Moloch was invok'd,
The blood of infants only smok'd!
But here, unless all hist'ry lies,
Whole realms have been a sacrifice.
Look through all courts; 'tis power we find
The gen'ral idol of mankind;
There worshipp'd under ev'ry shape;
Alike the lion, fox, and ape,
Are follow'd by time-serving slaves,
Rich pro-titutes and needy knaves.

Who then shall glory in his post?
How frail his pride! how vain his boast!

The foll'wers of his prosp'rous hour
 Are as unstable as his pow'r.
 Pow'r, by the breath of flatt'ry nurst,
 The more it swells, is nearer burst.
 The bubble breaks, the gewgaw ends,
 And in a dirty tear descends.

Ounce on a time an ancient maid,
 By wishes and by time decay'd,
 To cure the pangs of restless thought,
 In birds and beasts amusement sought:
 Dogs, parrots, apes, her hours employ'd;
 With these alone she talk'd and toy'd.

A huge baboon her fancy took,
 Almost a man in size and look:
 He finger'd ev'ry thing he found,
 And mimick'd all the servants round.
 Then too his parts and ready wit
 Shew'd him for ev'ry bus'ness fit:
 With all those talents, 'twas but just
 That pug should hold a place of trust:
 So to her fav'rite was assign'd
 The charge of all her feather'd kind.
 'Twas his to tend 'em eve and morn,
 And portion out their daily corn.

Behold him now, with haughty stride,
 Assume a ministerial pride.
 The morning rose; in hope of picking,
 Swans, turkeys, peacocks, ducks, and chicken,
 Fowls of all ranks surround his hut,
 To worship his important strut.
 The minister appears. The crowd,
 Now here, now there, obsequious bow'd.
 This prais'd his parts, and that his face,
 T'other his dignity in place:
 From bill to bill the flatt'ry ran;
 He hears and bears it like a man:

For, when we flatter self-conceit,
We but his sentiments repeat.

If we're too scrupulously just,
What profit's in a place of trust?
The common practice of the great
Is to secure a snug retreat.
So pug began to turn his brain,
Like other folks in place, on gain.
An apple-woman's stall was near,
Well stock'd with fruits through all the year:
Here ev'ry day he cramm'd his guts,
Hence were his hoards of pears and nuts;
For 'twas agreed in way of trade,
His payments should in corn be made.

The stock of grain was quickly spent,
And no account which way it went.
Then too the poultry's starv'd condition
Caus'd speculations of suspicion.
The facts were prov'd beyond dispute;
Pug must refund his hoards of fruit:
And, though then minister in chief,
Was branded as a publick thief;
Disgrac'd, despis'd, confin'd to chains,
He nothing but his pride retains.

A goose pass'd by; he knew the face,
Seen ev'ry levee while in place.

What, no respect! no rev'rence shown!
How saucy are these creatures grown!
Not two days since, says he, you bow'd
The lowes' of my fawning crowd.

Proud fool, replies the goose, 'tis true,
Thy corn a flutt'ring levee drew;
For that I join'd the hungry train,
And sold thee flatt'ry for thy grain.
But then, as now, conceited ape,
We saw thee in thy proper shape.

FABLE IV.

THE ANT IN OFFICE.

To a friend.

YOU tell me that you apprehend
My verse may touchy folks offend.
In prudence too you think my rhimes
Should never squint at courtiers' crimes;
For though nor this, nor that, is meant,
Can we another's thoughts prevent?

You ask me, if I ever knew
Court-chaplains thus the lawn pursue.
I meddle not with gown or lawn;
Poets, I grant, to rise must fawn.
They know great ears are over-nice,
And never shock their patron's vice;
But I this hackney path despise;
'Tis my ambition not to rise.

If I must prostitute the muse,
The base conditions I refuse.

I neither flatter nor defame,
Yet own I would bring guilt to shame.
If I corruption's hand expose,
I make corrupted men my foes.
What then? I hate the paltry tribe.
Be virtue mine; be theirs the bribe.
I no man's property invade:
Corruption's yet no lawful trade.
Nor would it mighty ills produce,
Could I shame brib'ry out of use.
I know 'twould cram most politicians,
Were they tied down to these conditions,

'Twould stint their pow'r, their riches bound,
And make their parts seem less profound.
Were they denied their proper tools,
How could they lead their knaves and fools?
Were this the case, let's take a view
What dreadful mischiefs would ensue.
Though it might aggrandize the state,
Could private lux'ry dine on plate?
Kings might indeed their friends reward,
But ministers find less regard.
Informers, sycophants, and spies,
Would not augment the year's supplies:
Perhaps too, take away this prop,
An annual job or two might drop.
Besides, if pensions were denied,
Could avarice support its pride?
It might ev'n ministers confound,
And yet the state be safe and sound.

I care not though 'tis understood;
I only mean my country's good:
And, let who will my freedom blame,
I wish all courtiers did the same.
Nay, though some folks the less might get,
I wish the nation out of debt.

I put no private man's ambition
With publick good in competition:
Rather than have our laws defac'd,
I'd vote a minister disgrac'd.

I strike at vice, be't where it will,
And what if great folks take it ill!
I hope corruption, brib'ry, pension,
One may with detestation mention;
Think you the law, let who will take it,
Can *scandalum magnatum* make it?
I vent no slander, owe no grudge,
Nor of another's conscience judge:

At him or him I take no aim,
Yet dare against all vice declaim.
Shall I not censure breach of trust,
Because knaves know themselves unjust?
That steward, whose account is clear,
Demands his honour may appear:
His actions never shun the light;
He is, and would be prov'd upright.

But then you think my fable bears
Allusion too to state-affairs.

I grant it does: and who's so great,
That has the privilege to cheat?
If then in any future-reign
(For ministers may thirst for gain)
Corrupted hands defraud the nation,
I bar no reader's application.

An ant there was, whose forward prate
Controul'd all matters in debate,
Whether he knew the thing or no,
His tongue eternally would go:
For he had impudence at will,
And boasted universal skill.
Ambition was his point in view;
Thus by degrees to pow'r he grew.
Behold him now his drift attain;
He's made chief treas'rer of the grain.

But as their ancient laws are just,
And punish breach of publick trust,
'Tis order'd, lest wrong application
Should starve that wise industrious nation,
That all accounts be stated clear,
Their stock, and what defray'd the year;
That auditors should these inspect,
And publick rapine thus be check'd.
For this the solemn day was set,
The auditors in council met:

The gran'ry-keeper must explain,
And balance his account of grain.
He brought, since he could not refuse 'em,
Some scraps of paper to amuse 'em.

An honest pismire, warm with zeal,
In justice to the publick weal,
Thus spoke: The nation's hoard is low;
From whence does this profusion flow?
I know our annual fund's amount.
Why such expence, and where's th' account?

With wonted arrogance and pride,
The ant in office thus replied:

Consider, Sirs, were secrets told,
How could the best-schem'd projects hold:
Should we state-mysteries disclose,
'Twould lay us open to our foes.
My duty and my well-known zeal
Bid me our present schemes conceal:
But, on my honour, all th' expence,
Though vast, was for the swarm's defence.

They pass'd th' account as fair and just,
And voted him implicit trust.

Next year again the gran'ry drain'd,
He thus his innocence maintain'd:

Think how our present matters stand,
What dangers threat from ev'ry hand;
What hosts of turkeys stroll for food,
No farmer's wife but hath her brood.
Consider, when invasion's near,
Intelligence must cost us dear;
And, in this ticklish situation,
A secret told betrays the nation.
But, on my honour, all th' expence,
Though vast, was for the swarm's defence.
Again, without examination,
They thank'd his sage administration.

The year revolves; the treasure spent
Again in secret service went.
His honour too again was pledg'd
To satisfy the charge alledg'd.

When thus, with panick shame possess'd,
An auditor his friends address'd:

What are we? ministerial tools;
We little knaves are greater fools.
At last this secret is explor'd;
'Tis our corruption thins the hoard:
For ev'ry grain we touch'd, at least
A thousand his own heaps increas'd.
Then, for his kin, and fav'rite spies,
A hundred hardly could suffice.
Thus, for a paltry sneaking bribe,
We cheat ourselves, and all the tribe;
For all the magazine contains
Grows from our annual toil and pains.

They vote th' account shall be inspected;
The cunning plund'rer is detected;
The fraud is sentenc'd; and his hoard,
As due, to publick use restor'd.

FABLE V.

THE BEAR IN A BOAT.

To a coxcomb.

THAT man must daily wiser grow,
Whose search is bent himself to know;
Impartially he weighs his scope,
And on firm reason founds his hope;

He tries his strength before the race,
And never seeks his own disgrace ;
He knows the compass, sail, and oar,
Or never launches from the shore ;
Before he builds, computes the cost,
And in no proud pursuit is lost :
He learns the bounds of human sense,
And safely walks within the fence :
Thus conscious of his own defect,
Are pride and self-importance check'd.

If then, self-knowledge to pursue,
Direct our life in ev'ry view,
Of all the fools that pride can boast
A coxcomb claims distinction most.

Coxcombs are of all ranks and kind ;
They're not to sex or age confin'd,
Or rich, or poor, or great, or small ;
And vanity besots 'em all.

By ignorance is pride increas'd :
Those most assume who know the least :
Their own false balance gives 'em weight,
But ev'ry other finds 'em light.

Not that all coxcombs' follies strike,
And draw our ridicule alike ;
To diff'rent merits each pretends :
This in love-vanity transcends ;
That, smitten with his face and shape,
By dress distinguishes the ape :
T'other with learning crams his shelf,
Knows books and all things but himself.

All these are fools of low condition,
Compar'd with coxcombs of ambition.
For those, puff'd up with flatt'ry, dare
Assume a nation's various care.
They ne'er the grossest praise mistrust,
Their sycophants seem hardly just :

For these in part alone attest
The flatt'ry their own thoughts suggest.
In this wide sphere a coxcomb's shown
In other realms besides his own :
The self-deem'd Machiavel at large
By turns controuls in ev'ry charge.
Does commerce suffer in her rights?
'Tis he directs the naval flights.
What sailor dares dispute his skill?
He'll be an adm'ral when he will.

Now, meddling in the soldier's trade,
Troops must be hir'd and levies made.
He gives ambassadors their cue,
His cobbled treaties to renew ;
And annual taxes must suffice
The current blunders to disguise.
When his crude schemes in air are lost,
And millions scarce defray the cost,
His arrogance, nought undismay'd,
Trusting in self-sufficient aid,
On other rocks misguides the realm,
And thinks a pilot at the helm.
He ne'er suspects his want of skill,
But blunders on from ill to ill ;
And when he fails of all intent,
Blames only unforeseen event.
Lest you mistake the application,
The fable calls me to relation.

A bear, of shag and manners rough,
At climbing trees expert enough ;
For dext'rously and safe from harm
Year after year he robb'd the swarm,
Thus thriving on industrious toil,
He gloried in his pilfer'd spoil.

This trick so swell'd him with conceit,
He thought no enterprize too great.

Alike in sciences and arts,
He boasted universal parts;
Pragmatick, busy, bustling, bold,
His arrogance was uncontroll'd:
And thus he made his party good,
And grew dictator of the wood.

The beasts with admiration stare,
And think him a prodigious bear.
Were any common booty got,
'Twas his each portion to allot:
For why, he found there might be picking
Ev'n in the carving of a chicken.
Intruding thus, he by degrees
Claim'd too the butcher's larger fees:
And now his over-weening pride
In ev'ry province will preside.
No task too difficult was found;
His blund'ring nose misleads the hound:
In stratagem and subtle arts,
He over-rules the fox's parts.

It chanc'd, as on a certain day
Along the bank he took his way,
A boat, with rudder, sail, and oar,
At anchor floated near the shore;
He stopt, and, turning to his train,
Thus pertly vents his vaunting strain:

What blund'ring puppies are mankind,
In ev'ry science always blind!
I mock the pedantry of schools,
What are their compasses and rules?
From me that helm shall conduct learn,
And man his ignorance discern.

So saying, with audacious pride
He gains the boat and climbs the side.
The beasts astonish'd line the strand;
The anchor's weigh'd, he drives from land:

The slack sail shifts from side to side;
 The boat untrimm'd admits the tide.
 Borne down, adrift, at random tost,
 His oar breaks short, the rudder's lost.
 The bear, presuming in his skill,
 Is here and there officious still;
 Till striking on the dang'rous sands
 A-ground the shatter'd vessel stands.
 To see the bungler thus distress'd,
 The very fishes sneer and jest.
 Ev'n gudgeons join in ridicule,
 To mortify the meddling fool.
 The clam'rous watermen appear;
 Threats, curses, oaths, insult his ear:
 Seiz'd, thresh'd and chain'd, he's dragg'd to land:
 Derision shouts along the strand.

FABLE VI.

THE 'SQUIRE AND HIS CUR.

To a country-gentleman.

THE man of pure and simple heart
 Through life disdains a double part.
 He never needs the screen of lies
 His inward bosom to disguise.
 In vain malicious tongues assail;
 Let envy snarl, let slander rail,
 From virtue's shield, secure from wound,
 Their blunted venom'd shafts rebound.
 So shines his light before mankind,
 His actions prove his honest mind.
 If in his country's cause he rise,
 Debating senates to advise,

Unbrib'd, unaw'd, he dares impart
 The honest dictates of his heart.
 No ministerial frown he fears,
 But in his virtue perseveres.

But would you play the politician,
 Whose heart's averse to intuition,
 Your lips at all times, nay, your reason,
 Must be controul'd by place and season.
 What statesman could his pow'r support,
 Were lying tongues forbid the court?
 Did princely ears to truth attend,
 What Minister could gain his end?
 How could he raise his tools to place,
 And how his honest foes disgrace?

That politician tops his part,
 Who readily can lie with art,
 The man's proficient in his trade;
 His pow'r is strong, his fortune's made.
 By that the int'rest of the throne
 Is made subservient to his own:
 By that have kings of old, deluded,
 All their own friends for his excluded.
 By that, his selfish schemes pursuing,
 He thrives upon the publick ruin.

Antiochus (i), with hardy pace,
 Provok'd the dangers of the chase;
 And, lost from all his menial train,
 Travers'd the wood and pathless plain:
 A cottage lodg'd the royal guest:
 The Parthian clown brought forth his best.
 The King unknown his feast enjoy'd,
 And various chat the hours employ'd.
 From wine what sudden friendship springs!
 Frankly they talk'd of courts and kings.

(i) Plutarch.

We country-folks, the clown replies,
Could ope our gracious monarch's eyes.
The king, as all our neighbours say,
Might he (God bless him !) have his way,
Is sound at heart, and means our good,
And he would do it, if he could.

If truth in courts were not forbid,
Nor kings nor subjects would be rid.
Were he in pow'r, we need not doubt him ;
But that transferr'd to those about him,
On them he throws the regal cares :
And what mind they ? Their own affairs.

If such rapacious hands he trust,
The best of men may seem unjust.
From kings to coblers 'tis the same :
Bad servants wound their masters' fame.
In this our neighbours all agree ;
Would the king knew as much as we.
Here he stopt short. Repose they sought :
The peasant slept ; the monarch thought.

The courtiers learn'd, at early dawn,
Where their lost sov'reign was withdrawn.
The guards' approach our host alarms,
With gaudy coats the cottage swarms.
The crown and purple robes they bring,
And prostrate fall before the king.
The clown was call'd, the royal guest
By due reward his thanks exprest.
The king then turning to the crowd,
Who fawningly before him bow'd,
Thus spoke : Since, bent on private gain,
Your counsels first misled my reign,
Taught and inform'd by you alone,
No truth the royal ear hath known,
'Till here conversing. Hence, ye crew,
For now I know myself and you.

Whene'er the royal ear's engrost,
State-lies but little genius cost:
The fav'rite then securely robs
And gleans a nation by his jobs.
Franker and bolder grown in ill,
He daily poisons dares instill;
And, as his present views suggest,
Inflames or soothes the royal breast.
Thus wicked ministers oppress,
When oft the monarch means redress.

Would kings their private subjects hear,
A minister must talk with fear:
If honesty oppos'd his views,
He dare not innocence accuse:
'Twould keep him in such narrow bound,
He could not right and wrong confound.
Happy were kings, could they disclose
Their real friends and real foes!
Were both themselves and subjects known,
A monarch's will might be his own.
Had he the use of ears and eyes,
Knaves would no more be counted wise.
But then a minister might lose
(Hard case!) his own ambitions views.
When such as these have vex'd a state,
Pursu'd by universal hate,
Their false support at once hath fail'd,
And persevering truth prevail'd.
Expos'd their train of fraud is seen;
Truth will at last remove the screen.

A country 'Squire, by whim directed,
The true, stanch dogs of chase neglected.
Beneath his board no hound was fed;
His hand ne'er stroak'd the spaniel's head.
A snappish cur, alone carest,
By lies had banish'd all the rest;

Yap had his ear; and defamation
 Gave him full scope of conversation.
 His sycophants must be preferr'd,
 Room must be made for all his herd:
 Wherefore, to bring his schemes about,
 Old faithful servants all must out.

The cur on ev'ry creature flew,
 (As other great men's puppies do,)
 Unless due court to him were shown,
 And both their face and business known.
 No honest tongue an audience found:
 He worried all the tenants round;
 For why, he liv'd in constant fear
 Lest truth by chance should interfere.
 If any stranger dar'd intrude,
 The noisy cur his heels pursu'd.
 Now fierce with rage, now struck with dread;
 At once he snarled, bit, and fled.
 Aloof he bays, with bristling hair,
 And thus in secret growls his fear:
 Who knows but truth, in this disguise,
 May frustrate my best guarded lies?
 Should she, thus mask'd, admittance find,
 That very hour my ruin's sign'd.

Now in his howl's continu'd sound,
 Their words were lost, the voice was drown'd.
 Ever in awe of honest tongues,
 Thus ev'ry day he strain'd his lungs.

It happen'd, in ill-omen'd hour,
 That Yap, unmindful of his pow'r,
 Forsook his post, to love inclin'd;
 A fav'rite bitch was in the wind:
 By her seduc'd, in am'rous play
 They frisk'd the joyous hours away.
 Thus by untimely love pursuing,
 Like Antony, he sought his ruin.

For now the 'Squire, unvex'd with noise,
An honest neighbour's chat enjoys.

Be free, says he, your mind impart;
I love a friendly open heart.

Methinks my tenants shun my gate;
Why such a stranger grown of late?
Pray tell me what offence they find:
'Tis plain they're not so well inclin'd.

Turn off your cur, the farmer cries,
Who feeds your ear with daily lies;
His snarling insolence offends:
'Tis he that keeps you from your friends.
Were but that saucy puppy checkt,
You'd find again the same respect.
Hear only him, he'll swear it too
That all our hatred is to you;
But learn from us your true estate:
'Tis that curs'd cur alone we hate.

The 'Squire heard truth. Now Yap rush'd in;
The wide hall echoes with his din:
Yet truth prevail'd; and, with disgrace,
The dog was cudgell'd out of place.

FABLE VII.

THE COUNTRYMAN AND JUPITER.

To Myself.

HAVE you a friend (look round and spy)
So fond, so prepossess'd as I?
Your faults, so obvious to mankind,
My partial eyes could never find.
When, by the breath of Fortune blown,
Your airy castles were o'erthrown,

Have I been over prone to blame,
Or mortified your hours with shame?
Was I e'er known to damp your spirit,
Or twit you with the want of merit?
'Tis not so strange that Fortune's frown
Still perseveres to keep you down.
Look round, and see what others do.
Would you be rich and honest too?
Have you, like those she rais'd to place,
Been opportunely mean and base?
Have you, as times requir'd, resign'd
Truth, honour, virtue, peace of mind?
If these are scruples, give her o'er;
Write, practise morals, and be poor.

The gifts of fortune truly rate;
Then tell me what would mend your state.
If happiness on wealth were built,
Rich rogues might comfort find in guilt:
As grows the miser's hoarded store,
His fears, his wants, increase the more.

Think, Gay, (what ne'er may be the case,)
Should fortune take you into grace,
Would that your happiness augment?
What can she give beyond content?

Suppose yourself a wealthy heir,
With a vast annual income clear!
In all the affluence you possess,
You might not feel one care the less.
Might you not then, like others, find
With change of fortune, change of mind?
Perhaps profuse beyond all rule,
You might start out a glaring fool;
Your luxury might break all bounds:
Plate, table, horses, stewards, hounds,
Might swell your debts; then lust of play
No regal income can defray.

Sunk is all credit, writs assail,
And doom your future life to jail.

Or, were you dignified with pow'r,
Would that avert one pensive hour?
You might give avarice its swing,
Defraud a nation, blind a king:
Then, from the hirelings in your cause,
Though daily fed with false applause,
Could it a real joy impart?

Great guilt knew never joy at heart.

Is happiness your point in view?
(I mean th' intrinsick and the true)
She nor in camps or courts resides,
Nor in the humble cottage hides;
Yet found alike in ev'ry sphere;
Who finds content, will find her there.

O'erspent with toil, beneath the shade
A peasant rested on his spade.

Good gods! he cries, 'tis hard to bear
This load of life from year to year.
Soon as the morning streaks the skies,
Industrious labour bids me rise;
With sweat I earn my homely fare,
And ev'ry day renews my care.

Jove heard the discontented strain,
And thus rebuk'd the murmur'ing swain:

Speak out your wants then, honest friend;
Unjust complaints the gods offend.
If you repine at partial fate,
Instruct me what could mend your state.
Mankind in ev'ry station see.

What wish you? Tell me what you'd be.

So said: upborne upon a cloud,
The clown survey'd the anxious crowd.

Yon face of care, says Jove, behold,
His bulky bags are fill'd with gold.

See with what joy he counts it o'er !
That sum to-day hath swell'd his store.
Were I that man, the peasant cried,
What blessing could I ask beside ?

Hold, says the god ; first learn to know
True happiness from outward show.
This optick glass of intuition — —
Here, take it, view his true condition.

He look'd, and saw the miser's breast,
A troubled ocean, ne'er at rest ;
Want ever stares him in the face,
And fear anticipates disgrace :
With conscious guilt he saw him start ;
Extortion gnaws his throbbing heart ;
And never, or in thought or dream,
His breast admits one happy gleam.

May Jove, he cries, reject my pray'r,
And guard my life from guilt and care !
My soul abhors that wretch's fate :
O keep me in my humble state !
But see, amidst a gaudy crowd,
You minister so gay and proud,
On him what happiness attends,
Who thus rewards his grateful friends !

First take the glass, the God replies ;
Man views the world with partial eyes.

Good gods ! exclaims the startled wight,
Defend me from this hideous sight !
Corruption, with corrosive smart,
Lies cank'ring on his guilty heart :
I see him, with polluted hand,
Spread the contagion o'er the land.
Now av'rice with insatiate jaws,
Now rapine with her harpy claws,
His bosom tears. His conscious breast
Groans, with a load of crimes oppress.

See him, mad and drunk with power,
 Stand tott'ring on ambition's tower.
 Sometimes, in speeches vain and proud,
 His boasts insult the nether crowd;
 Now, seiz'd with giddiness and fear,
 He trembles lest his fall is near.

Was ever wretch like this, he cries,
 Such misery in such disguise!
 The change, O Jove, I disavow;
 Still be my lot the spade and plough.

He next, confirm'd by speculation,
 Rejects the lawyer's occupation;
 For he the statesman seem'd in part,
 And bore similitude of heart.
 Nor did the soldier's trade inflame
 His hopes with thirst of spoil and fame:
 The miseries of war he mourn'd;
 Whole nations into deserts turn'd.

By these have laws and rights been brav'd;
 By these was free-born man enslav'd,
 When battles and invasion cease,
 Why swarm they in the lands of peace?
 Such change, says he, may I decline;
 The scythe and civil arms be mine;

Thus weighing life in each condition,
 The clown withdrew his rash petition.

When thus the God: «How mortals err!
 If you true happiness prefer,
 'Tis to no rank of life confin'd,
 But dwells in ev'ry honest mind.
 Be justice then your sole pursuit:
 Plant virtue, and content's the fruit.»

So Jove, to gratify the clown,
 Where first he found him, set him down.

FABLE VIII.

THE MAN, THE CAT, THE DOG, AND THE FLY.

To my native country.

HAIL, happy land! whose fertile grounds
 The liquid sence of Neptune bounds;
 By bounteous nature set apart,
 The seat of industry and art!
 O Britain! chosen port of trade,
 May lux'ry ne'er thy sons invade;
 May never minister, intent
 His private treasures to augment,
 Corrupt thy state. If jealous foes
 Thy rights of commerce dare oppose,
 Shall not thy fleets their rapine awe?
 Who is't prescribes the Ocean law?

Whenever neighb'ring states contend,
 'Tis thine to be the gen'ral friend.
 What is't who rules in other lands?
 On trade alone thy glory stands.
 That benefit is unconfin'd,
 Diffusing good among mankind:
 That first gave lustre to thy reigns,
 And scatter'd plenty o'er thy plains:
 'Tis that alone thy wealth supplies,
 And draws all Europe's envious eyes.
 Be commerce then thy sole design;
 Keep that, and all the world is thine.

When naval traffick ploughs the main,
 Who shares not in the merchant's gain?

'Tis that supports the regal state,
And makes the farmer's heart elate :
The num'rous flocks, that clothe the land,
Can scarce supply the loom's demand ;
Prolifick culture glads the fields,
And the bare heath a harvest yields.

Nature expects mankind should share
The duties of the publick care.
Who's born for sloth (1) ? To some we find
The plough-share's annual toil assign'd.
Some at the sounding anvil glow ;
Some the swift-gliding shuttle throw :
Some, studious of the wind and tide,
From pole to pole our commerce guide :
Some, taught by industry, impart
With hands and feet the works of art :
While some, of genius more refin'd,
With head and tongue assist mankind :
Each, aiming at one common end,
Proves to the whole a needful friend.
Thus, born each other's useful aid,
By turns are obligations paid.

The monarch, when his table's spread,
Is to the clown oblig'd for bread ;
And, when in all his glory drest,
Owes to the loom his royal vest.
Do not the mason's toil and care
Protect him from th' inclement air !
Does not the cutler's art supply
The ornament that guards his thigh !
All these, in duty to the throne,
Their common obligations own.
'Tis he (his own or people's canse)
Protects their properties and laws.

(1) Barrow.

Thus they their honest toil employ,
And with content their fruits enjoy.
In ev'ry rank, or great or small,
'Tis industry supports us all.

The animals, by want oppress'd,
To man their services address'd.
While each pursu'd their selfish good,
They hunger'd for precarious food.
Their hours with anxious cares were vex'd;
One day they fed, and starv'd the next.
They saw that plenty, sure and rife,
Was found alone in social life;
That mutual industry profess'd
The various wants of man redress'd.

The cat, half-famish'd, lean and weak,
Demands the privilege to speak.

Well, puss, says man, and what can you
To benefit the publick do?

The cat replies: These teeth, these claws,
With vigilance shall serve the cause.
The mouse, destroy'd by my pursuit,
No longer shall your feasts pollute.
Nor rats, from nightly ambuscade,
With wasteful teeth your stores invade.

I grant, says man, to gen'ral use
Your parts and talents may conduce;
For rats and mice purloin our grain,
And threshers whirl the flail in vain:
Thus shall the cat a foe to spoil,
Protect the farmer's honest toil.

Then, turning to the dog, he cried,
Well, sir; be next your merits tried.

Sir, says the dog, by self-applause
We seem to own a friendless cause.
Ask those who know me, if distrust
E'er found me treach'rous or unjust?

Did I e'er faith or friendship break?
 Ask all those creatures; let them speak.
 My vigilance and trusty zeal
 Perhaps might serve the publick weal.
 Might not your flocks in safety feed,
 Were I to guard the fleecy breed?
 Did I the nightly watches keep,
 Could thieves invade you while you sleep?
 The man replies: 'Tis just and right;
 Rewards such service should requite.
 So rare, in property, we find
 Trust uncorrupt among mankind,
 That, taken in a publick view,
 The first distinction is your due.
 Such merits all reward transcend:
 Be then my comrade and my friend.

Addressing now the fly: From you
 What publick service can accrue?
 From me! the flutt'ring insect said;
 I thought you knew me better bred:
 Sir, I'm a gentleman. Is't fit
 That I to industry submit?
 Let mean mechanicks, to be fed,
 By bus'ness earn ignoble bread.
 Lost in excess of daily joys,
 No thought, no care my life annoys.
 At noon, the lady's matin hour,
 I sip the tea's delicious flow'r.
 On cates luxuriously I dine,
 And drink the fragrance of the vine.
 Studios of elegance and ease,
 Myself alone I seek to please.

The man his pert conceit derides,
 And thus the useless coxcomb chides:

Hence, from that peach, that downy seat;
 No idle fool deserves to eat.

Could you have sapp'd the blushing rind,
 And on that pulp ambrosial din'd,
 Had not some hand with skill and toil,
 To raise the tree, prepar'd the soil?
 Consider, sot, what would ensue,
 Were all such worthless things as you.
 You'd soon be forc'd, by hunger stung,
 To make your dirty meals on dung:
 On which such despicable need,
 Unpitied, is reduc'd to feed.
 Besides, vain selfish insect, learn,
 (If you can right and wrong discern)
 That he who with industrious zeal
 Contributes to the publick weal,
 By adding to the common good,
 His own hath rightly understood.
 So saying, with a sudden blow,
 He laid the noxious vagrant low:
 Crush'd in his luxury and pride,
 The spunger on the publick died.

FABLE IX.

THE JACKALL, LEOPARD, AND OTHER BEASTS.

To a modern Politician.

I GRANT corruption sways mankind;
 That int'rest too perverts the mind;
 That bribes have blinded common sense,
 Foil'd reason, truth, and eloquence:
 I grant you too, our present crimes
 Can equal those of former times.

Against plain facts shall I engage,
To vindicate our righteous age?
I know, that in a modern list,
Bribes in full energy subsist.
Since then these arguments prevail,
And itching palms are still so frail,
Hence politicians, you suggest,
Should drive the nail that goes the best;
That it shews parts and penetration,
To ply men with the right temptation.

To this I humbly must dissent:
Premising, No reflexion's meant.

Does justice or the client's sense
Teach lawyers either side's defence?
The fee gives eloquence its spirit;
That only is the client's merit.

Does art, wit, wisdom, or address,
Obtain the prostitute's caress?
The guinea, as in other trades,
From ev'ry hand alike persuades.
Man, Scripture says, is prone to evil;
But does that vindicate the devil?
Besides, the more mankind are prone,
The less the devil's parts are shown.
Corruption's not of modern date;
It hath been tried in ev'ry state.
Great knaves of old their pow'r have fenc'd
By places, pensions, bribes dispens'd;
By these they gloried in success,
And impudently dar'd oppress;
By these despotically they sway'd,
And slaves extoll'd the hand that paid;
Nor parts nor genius were employ'd,
By these alone were realms destroy'd.

Now see these wretches in disgrace,
Strip'd of their treasures, pow'r, and place;

View them abandon'd and forlorn,
Expos'd to just reproach and scorn:
What now is all your pride, your boast?
Where are your slaves, your flatt'ring host?
What tongues now feed you with applause?
Where are the champions of your cause?
Now ev'n that very fawning train
Who shar'd the gleanings of your gain,
Press foremost who shall first accuse
Your selfish jobs, your paltry views,
Your narrow schemes, your breach of trust,
And want of talents to be just.

What fools were these amidst their pow'r!
How thoughtless of their adverse hour!
What friends were made? A hireling herd,
For temporary votes preferr'd.
Was it, these sycophants to get,
Your bounty swell'd a nation's debt?
You're bit. For these, like Swiss, attend;
No longer pay, no longer friend.

The lion is, beyond dispute,
Allow'd the most majestick brute;
His valour and his gen'rous mind
Prove him superior of his kind.
Yet to jackalls, as 'tis averr'd,
Some lions have their pow'r transferr'd:
As if the parts of pimps and spies
To govern forests could suffice.

Once, studious of his private good,
A proud jackall oppress'd the wood;
To cram his own insatiate jaws
Invaded property and laws.
The forest groans with discontent,
Fresh wrongs the gen'ral hate foment.
The spreading murmurs reach'd his ear;
His secret hours were vex'd with fear.

Night after night he weighs the case,
And feels the terrors of disgrace.

By friends, says he, I'll guard my seat;
By those, malicious tongues defeat:
I'll strengthen pow'r by new allies,
And all my clam'rous foes despise.

To make the gen'rous beasts his friends
He cringes, fawns, and condescends;
But those repuls'd his abject court,
And scorn'd oppression to support.
Friends must be had. He can't subsist.
Bribes shall new proselytes enlist.
But these nought weigh'd in honest paws;
For bribes confess'd a wicked cause:
Yet think not ev'ry paw withstands
What had prevail'd in human hands.

A tempting turnip's silver skin
Drew a base hog through thick and thin:
Bought with a stag's delicious haunch,
The mercenary wolf was stanch:
The convert fox grew warm and hearty,
A pullet gain'd him to the party:
The golden pippin in his fist,
A chatt'ring monkey join'd the list.

But soon, expos'd to publick hate,
The fav'rite's fall redress'd the state.
The leopard, vindicating right,
Had brought his secret frauds to light.
As rats (before the mansion falls)
Desert late hospitable walls,
In shoals the servile creatures run,
To bow before the rising sun.

The hog with warmth express'd his zeal,
And was for hanging those that steal;
But hop'd, though low, the publick heard
Might half a turnip still afford.

Since saving measures were profest,
 A lamb's head was the wolf's request.
 The fox submitted, if to touch
 A gosling would be deem'd too much.
 The monkey thought his grin and chatter
 Might ask a nut, or some such matter.

Ye hirelings, hence! the leopard cries;
 Your venal conscience I despise.
 He who the publick good intends
 By bribes needs never purchase friends.
 Who acts this just, this open part,
 Is propt by ev'ry honest heart,
 Corruption now too late hath show'd,
 That bribes are always ill bestow'd:
 By you your bubbled master's taught,
 Time-serving tools, not friends, are bought.

FABLE X.

THE DEGENERATE BEES.

To the reverend Dr. Swift, dean of St. Patrick's.

THOUGH courts the practice disallow,
 A friend at all times I'll avow.
 In politicks I know 'tis wrong:
 A friendship may be kept too long;
 And that they call the prudent part,
 Is to wear int'rest next the heart.
 As the times take a diff'rent face,
 Old friendships should to new give place.

I know too you have many foes,
 That owning you is sharing those:

That ev'ry knave in ev'ry station,
Of high and low denomination,
For what you speak, and what you write,
Dread you at once, and bear you spite.
Such freedoms in your works are shown,
They can't enjoy what's not their own.
All dunces too in church and state
In frothy nonsense shew their hate;
With all the petty scribbling crew,
(And those pert sots are not a few,)
'Gainst you and Pope their envy spurt :
The booksellers alone are hurt.

Good gods ! by what a pow'ful race
(For blockheads may have pow'r and place)
Are scandals rais'd, and libels writ,
To prove your honesty and wit !
Think with yourself : Those worthy men,
You know, have suffer'd by your pen.
From them you've nothing but your due.
From hence, 'tis plain, your friends are few.
Except myself, I know of none,
Besides the wise and good alone,
To set the case in fairer light,
My fable shall the rest recite ;
Which, though unlike our present state,
I for the moral's sake relate.

A bee of cunning, not of parts,
Luxurious, negligent of arts,
Rapacious, arrogant, and vain,
Greedy of pow'r, but more of gain,
Corruption sow'd throughout the hive.
By petty rogues the great ones thrive.

As pow'r and wealth his views supplied,
'Twas seen in overbearing pride.
With him loud impudence had merit :
The bee of conscience wanted spirit ;

And those who follow'd honour's rules
Were laugh'd to scorn for squeamish fools.
Wealth claim'd distinction, favour, grace;
And poverty alone was base.
He treated industry with slight,
Unless he found his profit by't.
Rights, laws, and liberties gave way
To bring his selfish schemes in play:
The swarm forgot the common toil,
To share the gleanings of his spoil.

While vulgar souls, of narrow parts,
Waste life in low mechanick arts,
Let us, says he, to genius born,
The drudg'ry of our fathers scorn.
The wasp and drone, you must agree,
Live with more elegance than we.
Like gentlemen they sport and play;
No bus'ness interrupts the day:
Their hours to luxury they give,
And nobly on their neighbours live.

A stubborn bee, among the swarm,
With honest indignation warm,
Thus from his cell with zeal replied;
I slight thy frowns, and hate thy pride.
The laws our native rights protect;
Offending thee, I those respect.
Shall luxury corrupt the hive,
And none against the torrent strive?
Exert the honour of your race:
He builds his rise on your disgrace.
'Tis industry our state maintains.
'Twas honest toils and honest gains
That rais'd our sires to pow'r and fame.
Be virtuous; save yourselves from shame.
Know that in selfish ends pursuing
You scramble for the publick ruin.

He spoke; and, from his cell dismiss'd,
Was insolently scoff'd and hiss'd,
With him a friend or two resign'd,
Disdaining the degen'rate kind.

These drones, says he, these insects vile,
(I treat them in their proper style)
May for a time oppress the state,
They own our virtue by their hate;
By that our merits they reveal,
And recommend our publick zeal;
Disgrac'd by this corrupted crew,
We're honour'd by the virtuous few.

FABLE XI.

THE PACK-HORSE AND THE CARRIER.

To a young nobleman.

BEGIN, my lord, in early youth,
To suffer, nay, encourage truth:
And blame me not for disrespect,
If I the flatt'rer's style reject;
With that, by menial tongues supplied,
You're daily cocker'd up in pride.

The tree's distinguish'd by the fruit.
Be virtue then your first pursuit;
Set your great ancestors in view,
Like them deserve the title too;
Like them ignoble actions scorn:
Let virtue prove you greatly born.

Tho' with less plate their side-board shone,
Their conscience always was their own;

They ne'er at levees meanly fawn'd,
 Nor was their honour yearly pawn'd;
 Their hands, by no corruption stain'd,
 The ministerial bribe disdain'd;
 They serv'd the crown with loyal zeal;
 Yet jealous of the publick weal,
 They stood the bulwark of our laws,
 And wore at heart their country's cause;
 By neither place nor pension bought,
 They spoke and voted as they thought.
 Thus did your sires adorn their seat;
 And such alone are truly great.

If you the paths of learning slight,
 You're but a dunce in stronger light;
 In foremost rank the coward plac'd
 Is more conspic'ously disgrac'd,
 If you, to serve a paltry end,
 To knavish jobs can condescend,
 We pay you the contempt that's due;
 In that you have precedence too.
 Whence had you this illustrious name?
 From virtue and unblemish'd fame.
 By birth the name alone descends;
 Your honour on yourself depends;
 Think not your coronet can hide
 Assuming ignorance and pride.
 Learning by study must be won,
 'Twas ne'er entail'd from son to son.
 Superior worth your rank requires;
 For that mankind reveres your sires:
 If you degen'rate from your race,
 Their merits heighten your disgrace.

A carrier, ev'ry night and morn,
 Would see his horses eat their corn.
 This sunk the hostler's vails, 'tis true,
 But then his horses had their due.

Were we so cautious in all cases,
Small gain would rise from greater places.

The manger now had all its measure,
He heard the grinding teeth with pleasure;
When all at once confusion rung,
They snorted, jostled, bit, and flung.
A pack-horse turn'd his head aside,
Foaming, his eye balls swell'd with pride,

Good gods! says he, how hard's my lot!
Is then my high descent forgot?
Reduc'd to drudg'ry and disgrace;
(A life unworthy of my race)
Must I too bear the vile attacks
Of ragged scrubs, and vulgar hacks?
See scurvy Roan, that brute ill-bred,
Dares from the manger thrust my head!
Shall I, who boast a double line,
On offals of these creatures dine?
Kick'd by old Ball! so mean a foe!
My honour suffers by the blow.
Newmarket speaks my grandsire's fame,
All jockeys still revere his name:
There yearly are his triumphs told;
There all his massy plates enroll'd.
Whene'er led forth upon the plain,
You saw him with a liv'ry train;
Returning too, with laurels crown'd;
You heard the drums and trumpets sound.
Let it then, Sir, be understood,
Respect's my due: for I have blood.
Vain-glorious fool! the carrier cried,
Respect was never paid to pride.
Know 'twas thy giddy wilful heart
Reduc'd thee to this slavish part.
Did not thy headstrong youth disdain
To learn the conduct of the rein?

Thus coxcombs, blind to real merit;
 In vicious frolicks fancy spirit.
 What is't to me by whom begot?
 Thou restive, pert, conceited sot.
 Your sires I rev'rence; 'tis their due:
 But, worthless fool, what's that to you?
 Ask all the carriers on the road,
 They'll say thy keeping's ill bestow'd.
 Then vaunt no more thy noble race,
 That neither mends thy strength nor pace.
 What profits me thy boast of blood?
 An ass hath more intrinsick good.
 By outward shew let's not be cheated!
 An ass should like an ass be treated.

FABLE XII.

PAN AND FORTUNE.

To a young heir.

SOON as your father's death was known,
 As if th' estate had been their own
 The gamesters outwardly exprest
 The decent joy within your breast.
 So lavish in your praise they grew,
 As spoke their certain hopes in you.

One counts your income of the year,
 How much in ready money clear.
 No house, says he, is more compleat;
 The garden's elegant and great.
 How fine the park around it lies!
 The timber's of a noble size.

Then count his jewels and his plate,
Besides, 'tis no entail'd estate.
If cash run low, his lands in fee
Are, or for sale, or mortgage, free.

Thus they, before you threw the main,
Seem'd to anticipate their gain.
Would you, when thieves were known abroad,
Bring forth your treasures in the road?
Would not the fool abet the stealth,
Who rashly thus expos'd his wealth?
Yet this you do, whene'er you play
Among the gentlemen of prey.

Could fools to keep their own contrive,
On what, on whom could gamesters thrive?
Is it in charity you game
To save your worthy gang from shame?
Unless you furnish'd daily bread,
Which way could idleness be fed?
Could these professors of deceit
Within the law no longer cheat,
They must run bolder risks for prey,
And strip the trav'ler on the way.
Thus in your annual rents they share,
And 'scape the noose from year to year.
Consider, ere you make the bet,
That sum might cross your tailor's debt.
When you the pilf'ring rattle shake,
Is not your honour too at stake?
Must you not by mean lies evade
To-morrow's duns from ev'ry trade?
By promises so often paid,
Is yet your tailor's bill defray'd?
Must you not pitifully fawn;
To have your butcher's writ withdrawn?
This must be done. In debts of play
Your honour suffers no delay:

And not this year's and next year's rent
 The sons of rapine can content.
 Look round. The wrecks of play behold,
 Estates dismember'd, mortgag'd, sold!
 Their owners, not to jails confin'd,
 Shew equal poverty of mind.
 Some, who the spoil of knaves were made,
 Too late attempt to learn their trade.
 Some, for the folly of one hour;
 Become the dirty tools of pow'r;
 And, with the mercenary list,
 Upon court-charity subsist.

You'll find at last this maxim true,
 Fools are the game which knaves pursue.

The forest, a whole cent'ry's shade,
 Must be one wasteful ruin made.
 No mercy's shewn to age or kind;
 The gen'ral massacre is sign'd.
 The park too shares the dreadful fate,
 For duns grow louder at the gate.
 Stern clowns obedient to the 'squire,
 (What will nor barb'rous hands for hire?)
 With brawny arms repeat the stroke:
 Fall'n are the elm and rev'rend oak.
 Through the long wood loud axes sound,
 And echo groans with ev'ry wound.

To see the desolation spread,
 Pan drops a tear, and hangs his head:
 His bosom now with fury burns;
 Beneath his hoof the dice he spurns.
 Cards too, in peevish passion torn,
 The sport of whirling winds are borne.

To snails invet'rate hate I bear,
 Who spoil the verdure of the year;
 The caterpillar I detest,
 The blooming spring's voracious pest;

The locust too, whose rav'nous band
Spreads sudden famine o'er the land,
But what are these? The dice's throw
At once hath laid a forest low.
The cards are dealt, the bet is made,
And the wide park hath lost its shade.
Thus is my kingdom's pride defac'd,
And all its ancient glories waste.
All this, he cries, is Fortune's doing:
'Tis thus she meditates my ruin.
By Fortune, that false, fickle jade,
More havock in one hour is made,
Than all the hungry insect race
Combin'd can in an age deface.

Fortune, by chance, who near him past,
O'erheard the vile aspersion cast.

Why, Pan, says she, what's all this rant?
'Tis ev'ry country-bubble's cant;
Am I the patroness of vice?
Is't I who cog or palm the dice?
Did I the shuffling art reveal,
To mark the cards or range the deal?
In all th' employments men pursue,
I mind the least what gamesters do.
There may, if computation's just,
One now and then my conduct trust:
I blame the fool, for what can I,
When ninety-nine my pow'r defy?
These trust alone their fingers' ends,
And not one stake on me depends.
Whene'er the gaming board is set,
Two classes of mankind are met:
But if we count the greedy race,
The knaves fill up the greater space.
'Tis a gross error, held in schools,
That Fortune always favours fools.

In play it never bears dispute;
 That doctrine these fell'd oaks confute:
 Then why to me such rancour shew?
 'Tis folly, Pan, that is thy foe.
 By me his late estate he won,
 But he by folly was undone.

FABLE XIII.

PLUTUS, CUPID, AND TIME.

OF all the burdens man must bear,
 Time seems most galling and severe:
 Beneath this grievous load oppress'd,
 Whe daily meet some friend distress'd.

What can one do? I rose at nine:
 'Tis full six hours before we dine:
 Six hours! no earthly thing to do!
 Would I had doz'd in bed till two!

A pamphlet is before him spread,
 And almost half a page is read:
 Tir'd with the study of the day,
 The flutt'ring sheets are toss'd away.
 He opes his snuff-box, hums an air,
 Then yawns and stretches in his chair.

Not twenty by the minute hand!
 Good gods! says he, my watch must stand!
 How muddling 'tis on books to pore!
 I thought I'd read an hour and more.
 The morning, of all hours, I hate.
 One can't contrive to rise too late.

To make the minutes faster run,
 Then too his tiresome self to shun,

To the next coffee-house he speeds,
Takes up the news, some scraps he reads.
Saunt'ring, from chair to chair he trails;
Now drinks his tea, now bites his nails.
He spies a partner of his woe;
By chat afflictions lighter grow;
Each other's grievances they share,
And thus their dreadful hours compare.

Says Tom, since all men must confess
That time lies heavy more or less,
Why should it be so hard to get
Till two a party at piquet?
Play might relieve the lagging morn:
By-cards long wintry nights are borne.
Does not quadrille amuse the fair,
Night after night, throughout the year?
Vapours and spleen forgot, at play
They cheat uncounted hours away.

My case, says Will, then must be hard,
By want of skill from play debarr'd.
Courtiers kill time by various ways;
Dependance wears out half their days.
How happy these, whose time ne'er stands!
Attendance takes it off their hands.
Were it not for this cursed show'r,
The park had whil'd away an hour.
At court, without or place or view,
I daily lose an hour or two,
It fully answers my design,
When I have pick'd up friends to dine,
The tavern makes our burden light;
Wine puts our time and care to flight.
At six, (hard case!) they call to pay.
Where can one go? I hate the play:
From six to ten! unless I sleep,
One cannot spend the hours so cheap.

The comedy's no sooner done,
But some assembly is begun :
Loit'ring, from room to room I stray ;
Converse, but nothing hear or say :
Quite tir'd, from fair to fair I roam.
So soon ! I dread the thoughts of home.
From thence to quicken slow-pac'd night
Again my tavern-friends invite :
Here too our early mornings pass,
'Till drowsy sleep retard the glass.

Thus they their wretched life bemoan,
And make each other's case their own.

Consider, friends, no hour rolls on,
But something of your grief is gone.
Were you to schemes of bus'ness bred,
Did you the paths of learning tread ;
Your hours, your days, would fly too fast ;
You'd then regret the minute past.
Time's fugitive and light as wind !
'Tis indolence that clogs your mind !
That load from off your spirits shake ;
You'll own, and grieve for your mistake.
Awhile your thoughtless spleen suspend,
Then read ; and, if you can, attend.

As Plutus, to divert his care,
Walk'd forth one morn to take the air,
Cupid o'ertook his strutting pace.
Each star'd upon the stranger's face,
'Till recollection set 'em right ;
For each knew t'other but by sight.
After some complimentary talk,
Time met 'em, bow'd, and join'd their walk.
Their chat on various subjects ran,
But most, what each had done for man.
Plutus assumes a haughty air.
Just like our purse-proud fellows here.

Let kings, says he, let coblers tell,
Whose gifts among mankind excel.
Consider courts; what draws their train?
Think you 'tis loyalty or gain?
That statesman hath the strongest hold,
Whose tool of politicks is gold.
By that, in former reigns, 'tis said,
The knave in pow'r hath senates led;
By that alone he sway'd debates,
Enrich'd himself, and beggar'd states.
Forego your boast. You must conclude,
That's most esteem'd that's most pursu'd.
Think too in what a woful plight
That wretch must live whose pocket's light.
Are not his hours by want deprest?
Penurious care corrodes his breast.
Without respect, or love, or friends,
His solitary day descends.

You might, says Cupid, doubt my parts,
My knowledge too in human hearts,
Should I the pow'r of gold dispute,
Which great examples might confute.
I know, when nothing else prevails,
Persuasive money seldom fails;
That beauty too, like other wares,
Its price, as well as conscience, bears.
Then marriage, as of late profest,
Is but a money-job at best.
Consent, compliance may be sold;
But love's beyond the price of gold.
Smugglers there are who by retail
Expose what they call love to sale,
Such bargains are an arrant cheat:
You purchase flatt'ry and deceit.
Those who true love have ever tried,
(The common cares of life supplied)

No wants endure, no wishes make,
But ev'ry real joy partake.
All comfort on themselves depends:
They want not pow'r, nor wealth, nor friends.
Love then hath ev'ry bliss in store:
'Tis friendship, and 'tis something more.
Each other ev'ry wish they give:
Not to know love, is not to live.

Or love, or money, Time replied,
Were men the question to decide,
Would bear the prize: on both intent,
My boon's neglected or mispent.
'Tis I who measure vital space,
And deal out years to human race.
Though little priz'd, and seldom sought,
Without me love and gold are nought.
How does the miser time employ?
Did I e'er see him life enjoy?
By me forsook, the hoards he won
Are scatter'd by his lavish son.
By me all useful arts are gain'd;
Wealth, learning, wisdom, is attain'd,
Who then would think, since such my pow'r,
That e'er I knew an idle hour!
So subtle and so swift I fly,
Love's not more fugitive than I.
Who hath not heard coquettes complain
Of days, months, years, mispent in vain?
For time misus'd they pine and waste,
And love's sweet pleasure never taste.
Those who direct their time aright,
If love or wealth their hopes excite,
In each pursuit fit hours employ'd,
And both by time have been enjoy'd.
How heedless then are mortals grown!
How little is their int'rest known!

In ev'ry view they ought to mind me;
For when once lost they never find me.

He spoke. The gods no more contest,
And his superiour gift confest,
That time, when truly understood,
Is the most precious earthly good.

FABLE XIV.

THE OWL, THE SWAN, THE COCK, THE SPIDER, THE ASS,
AND THE FARMER.

To a Mother.

CONVERSING with your sprightly boys,
Your eyes have spoke the mother's joys.
With what delight I've heard you quote
Their sayings in imperfect note!

I grant, in body and in mind,
Nature appears profusely kind.
Trust not to that. Act you your part;
Imprint just morals on their heart;
Impartially their talents scan:
Just education forms the man.

Perhaps (their genius yet unknown)
Each lot of life's already thrown;
That this shall plead, the next shall fight,
The last assert the church's right.
I censure not the fond intent;
But how precarious is th' event!
By talents misapplied and crost,
Consider, all your sons are lost.

One day (the tale's by Martial penn'd)
A father thus address'd his friend :

To train my boy, and call forth sense,
You know I've stuck at no expence,
I've tried him in the sev'ral arts,
(The lad, no doubt, hath latent parts)
Yet trying all, he nothing knows;
But, crab-like, rather backward goes.
Teach me what yet remains undone;
'Tis your advice shall fix my son.
Sir, says the friend, I've weigh'd the matter,
Excuse me, for I scorn to flatter:
Make him (nor think his genius checkt)
A herald or an architect.

Perhaps, as commonly 'tis known,
He heard th'advice, and took his own.

The boy wants wit: he's sent to school,
Where learning but improves the fool:
The college next must give him parts,
And cram him with the lib'ral arts.
Whether he blunders at the bar,
Or owes his infamy to war;
Or if by licence or degree
The sexton shares the doctor's fee;
Or from the pulpit by the hour
He weekly floods of nonsense pour,
We find (th' intent of nature foil'd)
A tailor or a butcher spoil'd.

Thus ministers have royal boons
Conferr'd on blockheads and buffoons:
In spite of nature, merit, wit,
Their friends for ev'ry post were fit.

But now let ev'ry muse confess
That merit finds its due success.
Th' examples of our days regard;
Where's virtue seen without reward?
Distinguish'd, and in place, you find
Desert and worth of ev'ry kind.

Survey the rev'rend bench and see
 Religion, learning, piety;
 The patron, ere he recommends,
 Sees his own image in his friend's.
 Is honesty disgrac'd and poor?
 What is't to us what was before?

We all of times corrupt have heard,
 When paltry minions were preferr'd;
 When all great offices, by dozens,
 Were fill'd by brothers, sons, and cousins.
 What matter ignorance and pride?
 The man was happily allied.
 Provided that his clerk was good,
 What though he nothing understood?
 In church and state, the sorry race
 Grew more conspicuous fools in place.
 Such heads, as then a treaty made,
 Had bungled in the cobbler's trade.

Consider, patrons, that such elves
 Expose your folly with themselves.
 'Tis yours, as 'tis the parent's care,
 To fix each genius in its sphere.
 Your partial hand can wealth dispense,
 But never give a blockhead sense.
 An owl of magisterial air;
 Of solemn voice, of brow austere,
 Assum'd the pride of human race,
 And bore his wisdom in his face;
 Not to depreciate learned eyes,
 I've seen a pedant look as wise.

Within a barn, from noise retir'd,
 He scorn'd the world, himself admir'd;
 And, like an ancient sage, conceal'd
 The follies publick life reveal'd.

Philosophers of old he read,
 Their country's youth to science bred,

Their manners form'd for ev'ry station
 And destin'd each his occupation.
 When Xenophon by numbers brav'd,
 Retreated, and a people sav'd,
 That laurel was not all his own;
 The plant by Socrates was sown.
 To Aristotle's greater name
 The Macedonian ow'd his fame.

Th' Athenian bird, with pride replete,
 Their talents equall'd in conceit;
 And, copying the Socratick rule,
 Set up for master of a school.
 Dogmatick jargon learnt by heart,
 Trite sentences hard terms of art,
 To vulgar ears seem'd so profound,
 They fancied learning in the sound.

The school had fame: the crowded place
 With pupils swarm'd of ev'ry race.
 With these the swan's maternal care
 Had sent her scarce-fledg'd cygnet heir:
 The hen, tho' fond and loth to part,
 Here lodg'd the darling of her heart:
 The spider, of mechanick kind,
 Aspir'd to science more refin'd:
 The ass learnt metaphors and tropes,
 But most on musick fix'd his hopes.

The pupils now, advanc'd in age,
 Were call'd to tread life's busy stage;
 And to the master 'twas submitted,
 That each might to his part be fitted.

The swan, says he, in arms shall shine;
 The soldier's glorious toil be thine.
 The cock shall mighty wealth attain:
 Go, seek it on the stormy main.

The court shall be the spider's sphere!
 Pow'r, fortune, shall reward him there.

In musick's art the ass's fame
Shall emulate Corelli's name.

Each took the part that he advis'd,
And all were equally despis'd.
A farmer, at his folly mov'd,
The dull preceptor thus reprov'd :

Blockhead, says he, by what you've done,
One would have thought 'em each your son :
For parents, to their offspring blind,
Consult nor parts nor turn of mind ;
But ev'n in infancy decree
What this, what t'other son should be.
Had you with judgment weigh'd the case,
Their genius thus had fix'd their place.
The swan had learnt the sailor's art :
The cock had play'd the soldier's part ;
The spider in the weaver's trade
With credit had a fortune made ;
But for the foal, in ev'ry class
The blockhead had appear'd an ass.

FABLE XV.

THE COOK-MAID, THE TURNSPIT, AND THE OX.

To a poor Man.

CONSIDER man in ev'ry sphere,
Then tell me, is your lot severe?
'Tis murmur, discontent, distrust,
That makes you wretched. God is just.

I grant that hunger must be fed,
That toil too earns thy daily bread.

What then? Thy wants are seen and known :
But ev'ry mortal feels his own.

We're born a restless needy crew :
Shew me the happier man than you.

Adam, though bless'd above his kind,
For want of social woman pin'd.

Eve's wants the subtle serpent saw,
Her fickle taste transgress'd the law :
Thus fell our sires ; and their disgrace
The curse entail'd on human race.

When Philip's son, by glory led,
Had o'er the globe his empire spread ;
When altars to his name were dress'd,
That he was man his tears confess'd.

The hopes of avarice are checkt :
The proud man always wants respect.
What various wants on pow'r attend !
Ambition never gains its end.
Who hath not heard the rich complain
Of surfeits and corporeal pain ?
He, barr'd from ev'ry use of wealth,
Envies the ploughman's strength and health.
Another in a beauteous wife
Finds all the miseries of life :
Domestick jars and jealous fear
Imbitter all his days with care.
This wants an heir ; the line is lost :
Why was that vain en ail ingrost ?
Canst thou discern another's mind ?
Why is't you envy ? Envy's blind.
Tell Envy, when she would annoy,
That thousands want what you enjoy.

The dinner must be dish'd at one.
Where's this vexatious turnspit gone ?
Unless the sculking cur is caught,
The surloin's spoil'd, and I'm in fault.

Thus said; (for sure you'll think it fit
That I the cook-maid's oaths omit)
With all the fury of a cook,
Her cooler kitchen Nan forsook.
The broomstick o'er her head she waves;
She sweats, she stamps, she puffs, she raves.
The sneaking cur before her flies:
She whistles, calls; fair speech she tries:
These nought avail. Her choler burns;
The fist and cudgel threat by turns:
With hasty stride she presses near;
He slinks aloof, and howls with fear.

Was ever cur so curs'd! he cried,
What star did at my birth preside!
Am I for life by compact bound
To tread the wheel's eternal round?
Inglorious task! Of all our race
No slave is half so mean and base.
Had fate a kinder lot assign'd,
And form'd me of the lap-dog kind,
I then, in higher life employ'd.
Had indolence and ease enjoy'd;
And, like a gentleman, carest,
Had been the lady's fav'rite guest:
Or were I sprung from spaniel line,
Was his sagacious nostril mine,
By me, their never erring guide,
From wood and plain their feasts supplied,
Knights, squires, attendant on my pace,
Had shar'd the pleasures of the chase.
Endu'd with native strength and fire,
Why call'd I not the lion sire?
A lion! such mean views I scorn.
Why was I not of woman born?
Who dares with reason's pow'r contend?
On man we brutal slaves depend:

To him all creatures tribute pay,
And luxury employs his day.

An ox by chance o'erheard his moan,
And thus rebuk'd the lazy drone :

Dare you at partial fate repine?
How kind's your lot compar'd with mine!
Decreed to toil, the barb'rous knife
Hath sever'd me from social life;
Urg'd by the stimulating goad,
I drag the cumbrous waggon's load:
'Tis mine to tame the stubborn plain
Break the stiff soil, and house the grain:
Yet I without a murmur bear
The various labours of the year.
But then consider that one day
(Perhaps the hour's not far away)
You, by the duties of your post,
Shall turn the spit when I'm the roast ;
And for reward shall share the feast,
I mean shall pick my bones at least.

'Till now, th' astonish'd cur replies,
I look'd on all with envious eyes.
How false we judge by what appears!
All creatures feel their sev'ral cares.
If thus yon mighty beast complains,
Perhaps man knows superior pains.
Let envy then no more torment,
Think on the ox, and learn content.

Thus said ; close foll'wing at her heel,
With chearful heart he mounts the wheel.

FABLE XVI.

THE RAVENS, THE SEXTON, AND THE EARTHWORM.

To Laura.

LAURA, methinks you're over-nice.
 True. Flatt'ry is a shocking vice ;
 Yet sure, whene'er the praise is just,
 One may commend without disgust.
 Am I a privilege denied,
 Indulg'd by ev'ry tongue beside ?
 How singular are all your ways !
 A woman, and averse to praise !
 If 'tis offence such truths to tell,
 Why do your merits thus excel ?

Since then I dare not speak my mind,
 A truth conspicuous to mankind ;
 Though in full lustre ev'ry grace
 Distinguish your celestial face ;
 Though beauties of inferior ray
 Like stars before the orb of day
 Turn pale and fade ; I check my lays,
 Admiring what I dare not praise.

If you the tribute due disdain,
 The muse's mortifying strain
 Shall, like a woman, in mere spite,
 Set beauty in a moral light.

Though such revenge might shock the ear
 Of many a celebrated fair ;
 I mean that superficial race
 Whose thoughts ne'er reach beyond their face ;

What's that to you? I but displease
Such ever-girlish ears as these.
Virtue can brook the thoughts of age,
That lasts the same through ev'ry stage.
Though you by time must suffer more
Than ever woman lost before;
To age is such indiff'rence shown,
As if your face were not your own.

Were you by Antoninus taught?
Or is it native strength of thought,
That thus, without concern or fright,
You view yourself by reason's light?
Those eyes of so divine a ray,
What are they? Mould'ring, mortal clay.
Those features, cast in heav'nly mould;
Shall, like my coarser earth, grow old;
Like common grass, the fairest flow'r
Must feel the hoary season's pow'r.

How weak, how vain is human pride!
Dares man upon himself confide?
The wretch who glories in his gain
Amasses heaps on heaps in vain.
Why lose we life in anxious cares
To lay in hoards for future years?
Can those, when tortur'd by disease,
Chear our sick heart, or purchase ease?
Can those prolong one gasp of breath,
Or calm the troubled hour of death?

What's beauty? Call ye that your own?
A flow'r that fades as soon as blown.
What's man in all his boast of sway?
Perhaps the tyrant of a day.

Alike the laws of life take place
Through ev'ry branch of human race:
The monarch of long regal line
Was rais'd from dust as frail as mine.

Can he pour health into his veins,
Or cool the fever's restless pains?
Can he, worn down in nature's course,
New-brace his feeble nerves with force?
Can he (how vain is mortal pow'r!)
Stretch life beyond the destin'd hour?
Consider, man; weigh well thy frame;
The king, the beggar is the same.
Dust form'd us all. Each breathes his day,
Then sinks into his native clay.

Beneath a venerable yew,
That in the lonely church-yard grew,
Two ravens sate. In solemn croak
Thus one his hungry friend bespoke:

Methinks I scent some rich repast;
The savour strengthens with the blast:
Snuff then, the promis'd feast inhale;
I taste the carcase in the gale.
Near yonder trees, the farmer's steed,
From toil and daily drudg'ry freed,
Hath groan'd his last. A dainty treat!
To birds of taste delicious meat.

A sexton, busy at his trade,
To hear their chat suspends his spade.
Death struck him with no farther thought
Than merely as the fees he brought.
Was ever two such blund'ring fools,
In brains and manners less than owls!
Blockheads, says he, learn more respect:
Know ye on whom you thus reflect?
In this same grave (who does me right,
Must own the work is strong and tight)
The 'squire that yon fair hall possess'd,
To-night shall lay his bones at rest.
Whence could the gross mistake proceed
The 'squire was somewhat fat indeed.

What then? The meanest bird of prey
 Such want of sense could ne'er betray:
 For sure some difference must be found
 (Suppose the smelling organ sound)
 In carcasses, (say what we can)
 Or where's the dignity of man?

With due respect to human race,
 The ravens undertook the case.
 In such similitude of scent.
 Man ne'er could think reflexions meant.
 As Epicures extol à treat,
 And seem their sav'ry words to eat,
 They prais'd dead horse, luxurious food,
 The ven'son of the prescient brood.

The sexton's indignation mov'd,
 The mean comparison reprov'd;
 Their undiscriminating palate blam'd,
 Which two-legg'd carrion thus defam'd.

Reproachful speech from either side
 The want of argument supplied:
 They rail, revile; as often ends
 The contest of disputing friends.

Hold, says the fowl; since human pride
 With consultation ne'er complied,
 Let's state the case, and then refer
 The knotty point: for tastes may err.

As thus he spoke, from out the mould
 An earth-worm, huge of size, unroll'd
 His monstrous length. They strait agree
 To choose him as their referee.
 So to th' experience of his jaws
 Each states the merits of the cause.

He paus'd, and with a solemn tone
 Thus made his sage opinion known.

On carcasses of ev'ry kind
 This maw hath elegantly din'd;

Provok'd by luxury or need,
On beast, or fowl, or man I feed:
Such small distinction's in the savour,
By turns I choose the fancied flavour,
Yet I must own, that human beast,
A glutton, is the rankest feast.
Man, cease this boast; for human pride
Hath various tracts to range beside.
The prince who kept the world in awe,
The judge whose dictate fix'd the law,
The rich, the poor, the great, the small,
Are levell'd. Death confounds them all.
Then think not that we reptiles share
Such cates, such elegance of fare:
The only true and real good
Of man was never vermin's food.
'Tis seated in th' immortal mind;
Virtue distinguishes mankind,
And that, as yet ne'er harbour'd here,
Mounts with the soul we know not where.
So, good man sexton, since the case
Appears with such a dubious face,
To neither I the cause determine;
For diff'rent tastes please diff'rent vermin.

FABLES

FOR

THE FEMALE SEX,

BY EDWARD MOORE.

P R E F A C E.

THE following fables were written at intervals, when I found myself in humour, and disengaged from matters of greater moment. As they are the writings of an idle hour, so they are intended for the reading of those, whose only business is amusement. My hopes of profit, or applause, are not immoderate; nor have I printed through necessity, or request of friends. I have leave from her Royal Highness to address her, and I claim the Fair for my readers. My fears are lighter than my expectations: I wrote to please myself, and I publish to please others; and this so universally, that I have not wished for correctness to rob the critick of his censure, or my friend of the laugh.

My intimates are few, and I am not solicitous to increase them. I have learnt that where the writer, would please, the man should be unknown. An author is the reverse of all other objects, and magnifies by distance, but diminishes by approach. His private attachments must give place to publick favour; for no man can forgive his friend the ill-natured attempt of being thought wiser than himself.

To avoid therefore the misfortunes that may attend me from any accidental success, I think it necessary to inform those who know me that I have been assisted in the following papers by the author of *Gustavus Vasa*. Let the crime of pleasing be his, whose talents as a writer, and whose virtues as a man, have rendered him a living affront to the whole circle of his acquaintance.

FABLES

BY

EDWARD MOORE.

FABLE I.

THE EAGLE AND THE ASSEMBLY OF BIRDS.

To her Royal Highness the princess of Wales.

THE moral lay, to beauty due,
I write, fair excellence, to you;
Well pleas'd to hope my vacant hours
Have been employ'd to sweeten yours.
Truth under fiction I impart,
To weed out folly from the heart,
And shew the paths that lead astray
The wand'ring nymph from wisdom's way.

I flatter none. The great and good
Are by their actions understood;
Your monument if actions raise,
Shall I deface by idle praise?
I echo not the voice of fame,
That dwells delighted on your name;
Her friendly tale, however true,
Were flatt'ry, if I told it you.

The proud, the envious, and the vain,
The jilt, the prude, demand my strain;
To these, detesting praise, I write,
And vent, in charity, my spite:

With friendly hand I hold the glass
 To all promiscuous as they pass ;
 Should folly there her likeness view,
 I fret not that the mirror's true ;
 If the fantastick form offend,
 I made it not, but would amend.

Virtue, in ev'ry clime and age,
 Spurns at the folly-soothing page,
 While satire, that offends the ear
 Of vice and passion, pleases her.

Premising this, your anger spare,
 And claim the fable you who dare.

The birds in place, by factions press'd,
 To Jupiter their pray'rs address'd ;
 By specious lies the state was vex'd,
 Their councils libellers perplex'd ;
 They begg'd (to stop seditious tongues)
 A gracious hearing of their wrongs.
 Jove grants their suit. The eagle sate
 Decider of the grand debate.

The pie, to trust and pow'r preferr'd,
 Demands permission to be heard,
 Says he, Prolixity of phrase
 You know I hate. This libel says,
 « Some birds there are who, prone to noise,
 « Are hir'd to silence wisdom's voice,
 « And, skill'd to chatter out the hour,
 « Rise by their emptiness to pow'r. »
 That this is aim'd direct at me,
 No doubt you'll readily agree ;
 Yet well this sage assembly knows,
 By parts to government I rose ;
 My prudent counsels prop the state ;
 Magpies were never known to prate.

The kite rose up. His honest heart
 In virtue's sufferings bore a part.

That there were birds of prey he knew ;
So far the libeller said true ;
« Voracious, bold, to rapine prone,
« Who knew no int'rest but their own ;
« Who hov'ring o'er the farmer's yard,
« Nor pigeon, chick, nor duckling, spar'd :
This might be true , but if applied
To him, in troth, the sland'rer lied.
Since ign'rance then might be misled,
Such things, he thought, were best unsaid.

The crow was vex'd. As yester-morn
He flew across the new-sown corn,
A screaming boy was set for pay,
He knew, to drive the crows away,
Scandal had found him out in turn,
And buzz'd abroad that crows love corn.

The owl arose with solemn face,
And thus harangu'd upon the case:
That magpies prate it may be true ;
A kite may be voracious too ;
Crows sometimes deal in new-sown pease :
He libels not who strikes at these ;
The slander's here — « But there are birds,
« Whose wisdom lies in looks, not words ;
« Blund'ers who level in the dark,
« And always shoot beside the mark. »
He names not me ; but these are hints,
Which manifest at whom he squints ;
I were indeed that blund'ring fowl,
To question if he meant an owl.

Ye wretches, hence ! the eagle cries,
'Tis conscience, conscience that applies ;
The virtuous mind takes no alarm,
Secur'd by innocence from harm ;
While guilt, and his associate fear,
Are startled at the passing air.

FABLE II.

THE PANTHER, THE HORSE, AND OTHER BEASTS.

THE man, who seeks to win the fair,
(So custom says) must truth forbear ;
Must fawn and flatter, cringe and lie,
And raise the goddess to the sky.
For truth is hateful to her ear,
A rudeness, which she cannot bear.
A rudeness? Yes. I speak my thoughts ;
For truth upbraids her with her faults.

How wretched, Chloe, then am I,
Who love you, and yet cannot lie !
And still, to make you less my friend,
I strive your errors to amend !
But shall the senseless sop impart
The softest passion to your heart,
While he who tells you honest truth,
And points to happiness your youth,
Determines by his care his lot,
And lives neglected and forgot ?

Trust me, my dear ; with greater ease
Your taste for flatt'ry I could please,
And similes in each dull line.
Like glow-worms in the dark, should shine.
What, if I say your lips disclose
The freshness of the op'ning rose ?
Or that your cheeks are beds of flow'rs,
Enripen'd by refreshing show'rs ?
Yet certain as these flow'rs shall fade,
Time ev'ry beauty will invade.

The butterfly, of various hue,
 More than the flow'r resembles you;
 Fair, flutt'ring, fickle, busy thing,
 To pleasure ever on the wing,
 Gayly coquetting for an hour,
 To die and ne'er be thought of more.

Would you the bloom of youth should last?
 'Tis virtue that must bind it fast;
 An easy carriage, wholly free
 From sour reserve, or levity;
 Good-natur'd mirth, an open heart,
 And looks unskill'd in any art;
 Humility, enough to own
 The frailties which a friend makes known;
 And decent pride, enough to know
 The worth that virtue can bestow.

These are the charms, which ne'er decay,
 Though youth and beauty fade away;
 And time, which all things else removes,
 Still heightens virtue, and improves.

You'll frown, and ask to what intent
 This blunt address to you is sent?
 I'll spare the question, and confess
 I'd praise you if I lov'd you less;
 But rail, be angry; or complain,
 I will be rude, while you are vain.

Beneath a lion's peaceful reign,
 When beasts met friendly on the plain,
 A panther of majestick port,
 (The vainest female of the court)
 With spotted skin, and eyes of fire,
 Fill'd ev'ry bosom with desire.
 Where e'er she mov'd, a servile crowd
 Of fawning creatures cring'd and bow'd,
 Assemblies ev'ry week she held
 (Like modern belles) with coxcombs fill'd,

Where noise, and nonsense, and grinace,
And lies, and scandal, fill'd the place.

Behold the gay, fantastick thing,
Encircled by the spacious ring!
Low-bowing, with important look,
As first in rank, the monkey spoke.
Gad take me, madam! but I swear,
No angel ever look'd so fair:
Forgive my rudeness, but I vow
You were not quite divine till now.
Those limbs! that shape! and then those eyes!
O, close them, or the gazer dies! —

Nay, gentle pug! for goodness hush,
I vow, and swear you make me blush,
I shall be angry at this rate;
'Tis so like flatt'ry, which I hate. —

The fox, in deeper cunning vers'd,
The beauties of her mind rehears'd,
And talk'd of knowledge, taste, and sense,
To which the fair have vast pretence!
Yet well he knew them always vain
Of what they strive not to attain,
And play'd so cunningly his part,
That pug was rival'd in his art.

The goat avow'd his am'rous flame,
And burnt — for what he durst not name;
Yet hop'd a meeting in the wood
Might make his meaning understood.
Half angry at the bold address,
She frown'd; but yet she must confess,
Such beauties might inflame his blood;
But still his phrase was somewhat rude.

The hog her neatness much admir'd;
The formal ass her swiftness fir'd;
While all to feed her folly strove,
And by their praises shar'd her love.

The horse, whose gen'rous heart disdain'd
Applause by servile flatt'ry gain'd,
With graceful courage silence broke,
And thus with indignation spoke :

When flatt'ring monkeys fawn and prate,
They justly raise contempt, or hate ;
For merit's turn'd to ridicule,
Applauded by the grinning fool.
The artful fox your wit commends,
To lure you to his selfish ends ;
From the vile flatt'rer turn away,
For knaves make friendships to betray.
Dismiss the train of fops and fools,
And learn to live by wisdom's rules ;
Such beauties might the lion warm,
Did not your folly break the charm ;
For who would court that lovely shape,
To be the rival of an ape ?

He said ; and, snorting in disdain,
Spurn'd at the crowd and sought the plain.

F A B L E I I I .

THE NIGHTINGALE AND GLOW-WORM.

THE prudent nymph, whose cheeks disclose
The lilly and the blushing rose,
From publick view her charms will screen,
And rarely in the crowd be seen ;
This simple truth shall keep her wise,
« The fairest fruits attract the flies ».

One night a glow-worm, proud and vain,
Contemplating her glitt'ring train,

Sure there never was in nature
 gant, so fine a creature!
 her insects, that I see,
 ug al ant, industrious bee,
 Or silk-worm, with contempt I view,
 With all that low mechanick crew
 Who servilely their lives employ
 In bus'ness, enemy to joy.
 Mean vulgar herd! ye are my scorn;
 For grandeur only I was born,
 Or sure am sprung from race divine,
 And plac'd on earth to live and shine.
 Those lights, that sparkle so on high,
 Are but the glow-worms of the sky;
 And kings on earth their gems admire,
 Because they imitate my fire.

She spoke. Attentive on a spray
 A nightingale forbore his lay;
 He saw the shining morsel near,
 And flew, directed by the glare;
 Awhile he gaz'd with sober look,
 And thus the trembling prey bespoke:

Deluded fool, with pride elate!
 Know 'tis thy beauty brings thy fate:
 Less dazzling, 'long thou might'st have lain
 Unheeded on the velvet plain:
 Pride, soon or late, degraded mourns,
 And beauty wrecks whom she adorns.

FABLE IV.

HYMEN AND DEATH.

SIXTEEN, d'ye say? Nay then 'tis time;
 Another year destroys your prime.

But stay. — The settlement ! « That's made. »
Why then's my simple girl afraid ?
Yet hold a moment, if you can,
And heedfully the fable scan.

The shades were fled, the morning blush'd,
The winds were in their caverns hush'd,
When hymen, pensive and sedate,
Held o'er the fields his musing gait.
Behind him, through the green wood shade,
Death's meagre form the god survey'd ;
Who quickly, with gigantick stride,
Out-went his pace and join'd his side.
The chat on various subjects ran,
Till angry hymen thus began.

Relentless death, whose iron sway
Mortals reluctant must obey,
Still of thy pow'r shall I complain,
And thy too partial hand arraign ?
When Cupid brings a pair of hearts,
All over stuck with equal darts,
Thy cruel shafts my hopes deride,
And cut the knot that hymen tied.

Shall not the bloody, and the bold,
The miser hoarding up his gold,
The harlot reeking from the stew,
Alone thy fell revenge pursue ?
But must the gentle, and the kind,
Thy fury, undistinguish'd, find ?

The monarch calmly thus replied ;
Weigh well the cause, and then decide.
That friend of yours you lately nam'd,
Cupid, alone is to be blam'd ;
Then let the charge be justly laid ;
That idle boy neglects his trade,
And hardly once in twenty years
A couple to your temple bears.

The wretches, whom your office blends,
 Silenus now, or Plutus sends ;
 Hence care, and bitterness, and strife,
 Are common to the nuptial life.

Believe me ; more than all mankind,
 Your vot'ries my compassion find ;
 Yet cruel am I call'd, and base ,
 Who seek the wretched to release ;
 The captive from his bonds to free
 Indissoluble but for me.

'Tis I entice him to the yoke ;
 By me, your crowded altars smoke :
 For mortals boldly dare the noose,
 Secure that death will set them loose.

FABLE V.

THE POET AND HIS PATRON.

W^HY, Cælia, is your spreading waist
 So loose, so negligently lac'd ?
 Why must the wrapping bed gown hide
 Your snowy bosom's swelling pride ?
 How ill that dress adorns your head,
 Distain'd. and rump'd from the bed !
 Those clouds, that shade your blooming face,
 A little water might displace,
 As nature ev'ry morn bestows
 The crystal dew to cleanse the rose.
 Those tresses, as the raven black,
 That wav'd in ringlets down your back,
 Uncomb'd, and injur'd by neglect,
 Destroy the face, which once they deck'd.

Whence this forgetfulness of dress ?
Pray, madam, are you married ? — Yes.
Nay, then indeed the wonder ceases,
No matter now how loose your dress is ;
The end is won, your fortune's made ;
Your sister now may take the trade.

Alas ! what pity 'tis to find
This fault in half the female kind !
From hence proceed aversion, strife,
And all that sours the wedded life.
Beauty can only point the dart,
'Tis neatness guides it to the heart ;
Let neatness then and beauty strive
To keep a wav'ring flame alive.

'Tis harder far (you'll find it true)
To keep the conquest, than subdue ;
Admit us once behind the screen,
What is there farther to be seen ?
A newer face may raise the flame,
But ev'ry woman is the same.

Then study chiefly to improve
The charm that fix'd your husband's love.
Weigh well his humour. Was it dress
That gave your beauty pow'r to bless ?
Pursue it still ; be neater seen ;
'Tis always frugal to be clean ;
So shall you keep alive desire,
And time's swift wing shall fan the fire.

In garret high (as stories say)
A poet sung his tuneful lay ;
So soft, so smooth his verse, you'd swear
Apollo and the Muses there ;
Thro' all the town his praises rung,
His sonnets at the playhouse sung ;
High waving o'er his lab'ring head
The goddess want her pinions spread,

And with poetick fury fir'd,
What Phœbus faintly had inspir'd.

A noble youth of taste and wit
Approv'd the sprightly things he writ,
And sought him in his cobweb dome,
Discharg'd his rent and brought him home.

Behold him at the stately board,
Who, but the poet, and my lord !
Each day deliciously he dines,
And greedy quaffs the gen'rous wines ;
His sides were plump, his skin was sleek,
And plenty wanton'd on his cheek ;
Astonish'd at the change so new,
Away th' inspiring goddess flew.

Now, dropt for politicks and news,
Neglected lay the drooping muse,
Unmindful whence his fortune came,
He stifled the poetick flame ;
Nor tale, nor sonnet, for my lady,
Lampoon, nor epigram was ready.

With just contempt his patron saw,
(Resolv'd his bounty to withdraw)
And thus, with anger in his look,
The late repenting fool bespoke.

Blind to the good that courts thee grown,
Whence has the sun of favour shone ?
Delighted with thy tuneful art,
Esteem was growing in my heart,
But idly thou reject'st the charm
That gave it birth, and kept it warm.

Unthinking fools, alone despise
The arts that taught them first to rise.

FABLE VI.

THE WOLF, THE SHEEP, AND THE LAMB.

DUTY demands, the parents' voice
Shou'd sanctify the daughter's choice;
In that is due obedience shewn :
To choose belongs to her alone.

May horror seize his midnight hour,
Who builds upon a parent's pow'r,
And claims, by purchase vile and base,
The loathing maid for his embrace!
Hence virtue sickens; and the breast,
Where peace had built her downy nest,
Becomes the troubled seat of care,
And pines with anguish and despair.

A wolf, rapacious, rough, and bold,
Whose nightly plunders thinn'd the fold,
Contemplating his ill-spent life,
And cloy'd with thefts, would take a wife.
His purpose known, the savage race
In num'rous crowds attend the place;
For why, a mighty wolf he was,
And held dominion in his jaws.
Her fav'rite whelp each mother brought,
And humbly his alliance sought;
But cold by age, or else too nice,
None found acceptance in his eyes.

It happen'd, as at early dawn
He solitary cross'd the lawn,
Stray'd from the fold, a sportive lamb
Skipp'd wanton by her fleecy dam;

When Cupid, foe to man and beast,
Discharg'd an arrow at his breast.

The tim'rous breed the robber knew,
And trembling o'er the meadow flew,
Their nimblest speed the wolf o'ertook,
And courtéous thus the dam bespoke :

Stay, fairest ! and suspend your fear ;
Trust me, no enemy is near :
These jaws, in slaughter oft imbru'd,
At length have known enough of blood ;
And kinder bus'ness brings me now,
Vanquish'd at beauty's feet to bow.
You have a daughter — Sweet ! forgive
A wolf's address — In her I live ;
Love from her eyes like lightning came,
And set my marrow all on flame ;
Let your consent confirm my choice,
And ratify our nuptial joys.

Me ample wealth and pow'r attend,
Wide o'er the plains my realms extend ;
What midnight robber dare invade
The fold, if I the guard am made ?
At home the shepherd's cur may sleep,
While I secure his master's sheep.

Discourse like this attention claim'd ;
Grandeur the mother's breast inflam'd ;
Now fearless by his side she walk'd,
Of settlements and jointures talk'd ;
Propos'd, and doubled her demands
Of flow'ry fields, and turnip-lands.
The wolf agrees : her bosom swells ;
To Miss her happy fate she tells ;
And, of the grand alliance vain,
Contemns her kindred of the plain.

The loathing lamb with horror hears,
And wearies out her dam with pray'rs ;

But all in vain ; mamma best knew
What unexperienc'd girls should do ;
So, to the neighb'ring meadow carried,
A formal ass the couple married.

Torn from the tyrant-mother's side,
The trembler goes, a victim-bride ;
Reluctant meets the rude embrace,
And bleats among the howling race.
With horror oft her eyes behold
Her murder'd kindred of the fold ;
Each day a sister-lamb is serv'd,
And at the glutton's table carv'd ;
The crashing bones he grinds for food,
And slakes his thirst with streaming blood.

Love, who the cruel mind detests,
And lodges but in gentle breasts,
Was now no more. Enjoyment past,
The savage hunger'd for the feast ;
But (as we find in human race,
A mask conceals the villain's face)
Justice must authorize the treat ;
Till then he long'd, but durst not eat.

As forth he walk'd in quest of prey,
The hunters met him on the way ;
Fear wings his flight ; the marsh he sought ;
The snuffing dogs are set at fault.
His stomach balk'd, now hunger gnaws ;
Howling, he grinds his empty jaws ;
Food must be had, and lamb is nigh ;
His maw invokes the fraudulent lie.
Is this (dissembling rage, he cried)
The gentle virtue of a bride ?
That, leagu'd with man's destroying race,
She sets her husband for the chase ;
By treach'ry prompts the noisy hound
To scent his footsteps on the ground ?

Thou trait'ress vile! for this thy blood
 Shall glut my rage and die the wood!
 So saying, on the lamb he flies,
 Beneath his jaws the victim dies.

FABLE VII.

THE GOOSE AND THE SWANS.

I HATE the face, however fair,
 That carries an affected air;
 The lisping tone, the shape constrain'd,
 The studied look, the passion feign'd,
 Are fopperies which only tend
 To injure what they strive to mend.

With what superior grace enchants
 The face which nature's pencil paints;
 Where eyes, unexercis'd in art,
 Glow with the meaning of the heart;
 Where freedom, and good-humour sit,
 And easy gaiety, and wit!

Though perfect beauty be not there,
 The master-lines, the finish'd air,
 We catch from ev'ry look delight,
 And grow enamour'd at the sight:
 For beauty, though we all approve,
 Excites our wonder more than love;
 While the agreeable strikes sure,
 And gives the wounds we cannot cure.

Why then, my Amoret, this care
 That forms you, in effect, less fair?
 If nature on your cheek bestows
 A bloom that emulates the rose,

Or from some heav'nly image drew,
A form Apelles never knew,
Your ill-judg'd aid will you impart,
And spoil by meretricious art?
Or had you, nature's error, come
Abortive from the mother's womb,
Your forming care she still rejects,
Which on y heightens her defects.
When such, of glitt'ring jewels proud,
Still press the foremost in the crowd,
At ev'ry publick shew are seen,
With look awry, and awkward mien,
The gaudy dress attracts the eye,
And magnifies deformity.

Nature may underdo her part,
But seldom wants the help of art:
Trust her, she is your surest friend;
Nor made your form for you to mend.

A goose, affected, empty, vain,
The shrillest of the cackling train,
With proud and elevated crest,
Precedence claim'd above the rest.

Says she: I laugh at human race,
Who say geese hobble in their pace;
Look here! — the sland'rous lie detect;
Not haughty man is so erect.

That peacock yonder, lord! Low vain
The creature's of his gaudy train!

If both were stript, I'd pawn my word,
A goose would be the finer bird.

Nature, to hide her own defects,
Her bungled work with finery decks;
Were geese set off with half that show,
Would men admire the peacock? No.

Thus vaunting cross the mead she stalks;
The cackling breed attend her walks;

The sun shot down his noon-tide beams,
The swans were sporting in the streams;
Their snowy plumes and stately pride
Provok'd her spleen. Why there, she cried,
Again, what arrogance we see!
Those creatures! how they mimick me!
Shall ev'ry fowl the waters skim,
Because we geese are known to swim!
Humility they soon shall learn,
And their own emptiness discern.

So saying, with extended wings,
Lightly upon the wave she springs;
Her bosom swells, she spreads her plumes,
And the swan's stately crest assumes.
Contempt and mockery ensu'd,
And bursts of laughter shook the flood.

A swan, superior to the rest,
Sprung forth, and thus the fool address'd,
Conceited thing, elate with pride!
Thy affectation all deride;
These airs thy awkwardness impart,
And shew thee plainly as thou art.
Among thy equals of the flock,
Thou hadst escap'd the publick mock,
And, as thy parts to good conduce,
Been deem'd an honest hobbling goose.

Learn hence to study wisdom's rules;
Know soppery's the pride of fools;
And striving nature to conceal,
You only her defects reveal.

FABLE VIII.

THE LAWYER AND JUSTICE.

LOVE! thou divinest good below,
Thy pure delights few mortals know;
Our rebel hearts thy sway disown,
While tyrant lust usurps thy throne.

The bounteous god of nature made
The sexes for each other's aid,
Their mutual talents to employ
To lessen ills and heighten joy.
To weaker woman he assign'd
That soft'ning gentleness of mind,
That can by sympathy impart
Its likeness to the roughest heart:
Her eyes with magick pow'r endu'd,
To fire the dull, and awe the rude;
His rosy fingers on her face
Shed lavish ev'ry blooming grace,
And stamp'd (perfection to display)
His mildest image on her clay.

Man, active, resolute, and bold,
He fashion'd in a diff'rent mould;
With useful arts his mind inform'd,
His breast with nobler passions warm'd;
He gave him knowledge, taste, and sense,
And courage for the fair's defence:
Her frame, resistless to each wrong,
Demands protection from the strong;
To man she flies when fear alarms,
And claims the temple of his arms.

By nature's author thus declar'd
The woman's sov'reign, and her guard,
Shall man by treach'rous wiles invade
The weakness he was meant to aid?
While beauty, given to inspire
Protecting love and soft desire,
Lights up a wild-fire in the heart,
And to its own breast points the dart,
Becomes the spoiler's base pretence
To triumph over innocence.

The wolf that tears the tim'rous sheep
Was never set the fold to keep;
Nor was the tyger, or the pard,
Meant the benighted trav'ler's guard;
But man, the wildest beast of prey,
Wears friendship's semblance to betray;
His strength against the weak employs,
And, where he should protect, destroys.

Past twelve o'clock the watchman cried,
His brief the stndious Lawyer plied;
The all-prevailing fee lay nigh,
The earnest of to morrow's lie.
Sudden the furious winds arise,
The jarring casement shatter'd flies,
The doors admit a hollow sound,
And rattling from their hinges bound;
When Justice, in a blaze of light,
Reveal'd her radiant form to sight.

The wretch with thrilling horror shook,
Loose ev'ry joint, and pale his look;
Not having seen her in the courts,
Or found her mention'd in reports,
He ask'd, with falt'ring tongue, her name,
Her errand there, and whence she came?

Sternly the white-rob'd Shade replied,
(A crimson glow her visage died)

Canst thou be doubtful who I am?
Is justice grown so strange a name?
Were not your courts for justice rais'd?
'Twas there of old my altars blaz'd.
My guardian thee did I elect,
My sacred temple to protect,
That thou and all thy venal tribe
Should spurn the goddess for the bribe?
Aloud the ruin'd client cries,
Justice has neither ears, nor eyes;
In foul alliance with the Bar,
'Gainst me the judge denounces war,
And rarely issues his decree,
But with intent to baffle me.

She paus'd. Her breast with fury burn'd.
The trembling lawyer thus return'd.

I own the charge is justly laid,
And weak th' excuse that can be made;
Yet search the spacious globe, and see
If all mankind are not like me.

The gown-man, skill'd in romish lies,
By faith's false glass deludes our eyes,
O'er conscience rides without controul,
And robs the man to save his soul.

The doctor, with important face,
By sly design mistakes the case;
Prescribes, and spins out the disease.
To trick the patient of his fees.

The soldier, rough with many a scar,
And red with slaughter, leads the war;
If he a nation's trust betray,
The foe has offer'd double pay.

When vice o'er all mankind prevails,
And we ghty int'rest turns the scales,
Must I be better than the rest,
And harbour justice in my breast?

On one side only take the fee,
Content with poverty and thee?

Thou blind to sense, and vile of mind!
Th' exasperated Shade rejoin'd,
If virtue from the world is flown,
Will others' frauds excuse thy own?
For sickly souls the priest was made;
Physicians for the body's aid;
The soldier guarded liberty;
Man, woman; and the lawyer, me.
If all are faithless to their trust,
They leave not thee the less unjust.
Henceforth your pleadings I disclaim,
And bar the sanction of my name;
Within your courts it shall be read,
That Justice from the law is fled.

She spoke; and hid in shades her face,
'Till Hardwick sooth'd her into grace.

FABLE IX.

THE FARMER, THE SPANIEL, AND THE CAT.

WHY knits my dear her angry brow?
What rude offence alarms you now?
I said that Delia's fair, 'tis true,
But did I say she equall'd you?
Can't I another's face commend,
Or to her virtues be a friend,
But instantly your forehead low'rs,
As if her merit lessen'd yours?
From female envy never free,
All must be blind because you see.

Survey the gardens, fields, and bow'rs,
The buds, the blossoms, and the flow'rs;
Then tell me where the wood-bind grows,
That vies in sweetness with the rose,
Or where the lilly's snowy white,
That throws such beauties on the sight?
Yet folly is it to declare,
That these are neither sweet, nor fair.
The crystal shines with fainter rays,
Before the di'mond's brighter blaze;
And fops will say the di'mond dies
Before the lustre of your eyes :
But I, who deal in truth, deny
That neither shine when you are by.

When zephyrs o'er the blossoms stray,
And sweets along the air convey,
Sha'n't I the fragrant breeze inhale,
Because you breathe a sweeter gale?

Sweet are the flow'rs that deck the field;
Sweet is the smell the blossoms yield;
Sweet is the summer gale that blows,
And sweet, tho' sweeter you, the rose.

Shall envy then torment your breast,
If you are lovelier than the rest?
For while I give to each her due,
By praising them I flatter you;
And praising most I still declare
You fairest, where the rest are fair.

As at his board a farmer sate,
Replenish'd by his homely treat,
His fav'rite spaniel near him stood,
And with his master shar'd the food;
The crackling bones his jaws devour'd,
His lapping tongue the trenchers scour'd;
Till sated now supine he lay,
And snor'd the rising fumes away.

The hungry cat in turn drew near,
 And humbly crav'd a servant's share;
 Her modest worth the master knew,
 And straight the fatt'ning morsel threw:
 Enrag'd the snarling cur awoke,
 And thus with spiteful envy spoke:

They only claim a right to eat,
 Who earn by services their meat;
 Me zeal and industry inflame
 To scour the fields, and spring the game;
 Or, plunging in the wint'ry wave,
 For man the wounded bird to save.
 With watchful diligence I keep
 From prowling wolves his fleecy sheep;
 At home his midnight hours secure,
 And drive the robber from the door.
 For this, his breast with kindness glows;
 For this, his hand the food bestows;
 And shall thy indolence impart
 A warmer friendship to his heart,
 That thus he robs me of my due,
 To pamper such vile things as you?

I own, with meekness puss replied,
 Superior merit on your side;
 Nor does my breast with envy swell,
 To find it recompenc'd so well;
 Yet I, in what my nature can,
 Contribute to the good of man.
 Whose claws destroy the pilf'ring mouse?
 Who drives the vermin from the house?
 Or, watchful for the lab'ring swain,
 From lurking rats secure the grain?
 From hence if he rewards bestow,
 Why should your heart with gall o'erflow?
 Why pine my happiness to see,
 Since there's enough for you and me?

Thy words are just, the farmer cried,
And spurn'd the snarler from his side.

FABLE X.

THE SPIDER AND THE BEE.

THE nymph, who walks the publick streets,
And sets her cap at all she meets,
May catch the fool who turns to stare;
But men of sense avoid the snare.

As on the margin of the flood,
With silken line, my Lydia stood,
I smil'd to see the pains you took,
To cover o'er the fraudulent hook.
Along the forest as we stray'd,
You saw the boy his lime-twigs spread;
Guess'd you the reason of his fear?
Lest heedless we approach'd too near;
For as behind the bush we lay,
The linnet flutter'd on the spray.

Needs there such caution to delude
The scaly fry and feather'd brood?
And think you with inferior art
To captivate the human heart?

The maid, who modestly conceals
Her beauties, while she hides, reveals:
Give but a glimpse, and fancy draws
Whate'er the grecian Venus was.
From Eve's first fig-leaf to brocade,
All dress was meant for fancy's aid,
Which evermore delighted dwells
On what the bashful nymph conceals.

When Cælia struts in man's attire,
She shews too much to raise desire;
But from the hoop's bewitching round,
Her very shoe has pow'r to wound.

The roving eye, the bosom bare,
The forward laugh, the wanton air,
May catch the fop; for gudgeons strike
At the bare hook, and bait, alike;
While salmon play regardless by,
Till art, like nature, forms the fly.

Beneath a peasant's homely thatch,
A spider long had held her watch;
From morn to night, with restless care,
She spun her web, and wove her snare:
Within the limits of her reign,
Lay many a heedless captive slain,
Or flutt'ring, struggled in the toils,
To burst the chains and shun her wiles.

A straying bee, that perch'd hard by,
Beheld her with disdainful eye,
And thus began: Mean thing! give o'er,
And lay thy slender threads no more;
A thoughtless fly, or two at most,
Is all the conquest thou canst boast;
For bees of sense thy arts evade,
We see so plain the nets are laid.

The gaudy tulip that displays
Her spreading foliage to the gaze;
That points her charms at all she sees,
And yields to ev'ry wanton breeze,
Attracts not me; where blushing grows
Guarded with thorns the modest rose,
Enamour'd round and round I fly,
Or on her fragrant bosom lie;
Reluctant, she my ardour meets,
And bashful renders up her sweets.

To wiser heads attention lend,
And learn this lesson from a friend:
She who with modesty retires,
Adds fewel to her lover's fires,
While such incautious jilts as you,
By folly your own schemes undo.

FABLE XI.

THE YOUNG LION AND THE APE.

'T is true, I blame your lover's choice,
Though flatter'd by the publick voice;
And peevish grow and sick to hear
His exclamations, O how fair!
I listen not to wild delights,
And transports of expected nights;
What is to me your hoard of charms,
The whiteness of your neck and arms?
Needs there no acquisition more,
To keep contention from the door?
Yes; pass a fortnight, and you'll find
All beauty cloy's but of the mind.

Sense, and good-humour ever prove
The surest cords to fasten love.
Yet, Phillis, simplest of your sex,
You never think but to perplex,
Coquetting it with ev'ry ape
That struts abroad in human shape;
Not that the coxcomb is your taste,
But that it stings your lover's breast;
To-morrow you resign the sway,
Prepar'd to honour and obey,

The tyrant-mistress change for life
To the submission of a wife.

Your follies, if you can, suspend,
And learn instruction from a friend.

Reluctant, hear the first address ;
Think often ere you answer, Yes :
But once resolv'd, throw off disguise,
And wear your wishes in your eyes ;
With caution ev'ry look forbear,
That might create one jealous fear,
A lover's ripening hopes confound,
Or give the gen'rous breast a wound ;
Contemn the girlish arts to tease,
Nor use your pow'r, unless to please ;
For fools alone with rigour sway,
When soon or late they must obey.

The king of brutes, in life's decline,
Resolv'd dominion to resign ;
The beasts were summon'd to appear,
And bend before the royal heir.
They came ; a day was fix'd ; the crowd
Before their future monarch bow'd.

A dapper monkey, pert and vain,
Stepp'd forth, and thus address'd the train :
Why cringe my friends with slavish awe,
Before this pageant king of straw ?
Shall we anticipate the hour,
And, ere we feel it, own his pow'r ?
The counsels of experience prize,
I know the maxims of the wise ;
Subjection let us cast away,
And live the monarchs of to-day :
'Tis ours the vacant hand to spurn,
And play the tyrant each in turn.
So shall he right from wrong discern,
And mercy from oppression learn ;

At others' woes be taught to melt,
And loath the ills himself has felt.

He spoke; his bosom swell'd with pride.
The youthful lion thus replied :

What madness prompts thee to provoke
My wrath, and dare th' impending stroke?
Thou wretched fool! can wrongs impart
Compassion to the feeling heart,
Or teach the grateful breast to glow,
The hand to give, or eye to flow?
Learn'd in the practice of their schools,
From women thou hast drawn thy rules;
To them return ; in such a cause
From only such expect applause;
The partial sex I don't condemn
For liking those who copy them.

Would'st thou the gen'rous lion bind?
By kindness bribe him to be kind;
Good offices their likeness get,
And payment lessens not the debt;
With multiplying hand he gives
The good from others he receives;
Or for the bad makes fair return,
And pays with int'rest scorn for scorn.

FABLE XII.

THE COLT AND THE FARMER.

TELL me, Corinna, if you can,
Why so averse, so coy to man?
Did nature, lavish of her care,
From her best pattern form you fair,

That you, ungrateful to her cause,
Should mock her gifts, and spurn her laws;
And, miser-like, with-hold that store,
Which by imparting blesses more?

Beauty's a gift, by heav'n assign'd
The portion of the female kind;
For this the yielding maid demands
Protection at her lover's hands;
And though by wasting years it fade,
Remembrance tells him once 'twas paid.

And will you then this wealth conceal,
For age to rust, or time to steal,
The summer of your youth to rove,
A stranger to the joys of love?
Then, when life's winter hastens on,
And youth's fair heritage is gone,
Dow'rless to court some peasant's arms
To guard your wither'd age from harms,
No gratitude to warm his breast,
For blooming beauty once possess'd;
How will you curse that stubborn pride,
Which drove your bark across the tide,
And, sailing before folly's wind,
Left sense and happiness behind?

Corinna, lest these whims prevail,
To such as you I write my tale.

A colt, for blood and mettled speed
The choicest of the running breed,
Of youthful strength and beauty vain,
Refus'd subjection to the rein.
In vain the groom's officious skill
Oppos'd his pride, and check'd his will;
In vain the master's forming care
Restrain'd with threats, or sooth'd with pray'r;
Of freedom proud, and scorning man,
Wild o'er the spacious plains he ran.

Where'er luxuriant nature spread
Her flow'ry carpet o'er the mead,
Or bubbling streams soft-gliding pass
To cool and freshen up the grass,
Disdaining bounds, he cropt the blade,
And wanton'd in the spoil he made.

In plenty thus the summer past,
Revolving winter came at last ;
The trees no more a shelter yield,
The verdure withers from the field,
Perpetual snows invest the ground,
In icy chains the streams are bound,
Cold nipping winds, and rattling hail,
His lank unshelter'd sides assail.
As round he cast his rueful eyes,
He saw the thatch-roof'd cottage rise ;
The prospect touch'd his heart with cheer ;
And promis'd kind deliv'rance near.
A stable, erst his scorn and hate,
Was now become his wish'd retreat ;
His passion cool, his pride forgot,
A farmer's welcome yard he sought.

The master saw his woeful plight,
His limbs that totter'd with his weight,
And friendly to the stable led,
And saw him litter'd, dress'd, and fed,
In slothful ease all night he lay ;
The servants rose at break of day ;
The market calls : along the road
His back must bear the pond'rous load ;
In vain he struggles or complains,
Incessant blows reward his pains.
To-morrow varies but his toil ;
Chain'd to the plough, he breaks the soil ;
While scanty meals at night repay
The painful labours of the day.

Subdu'd by toil, with anguish rent,
 His self-upbraidings found a vent.
 Wretch that I am ! he sighing said,
 By arrogance and folly led,
 Had but my restive youth been brought
 To learn the lesson nature taught,
 Then had I, like my sires of yore,
 The prize from ev'ry courser bore;
 While man bestow'd rewards and praise,
 And females crown'd my latter days.
 Now lasting servitude's my lot,
 My birth condemn'd, my speed forgot,
 Doom'd am I for my pride to bear
 A living death from year to year.

FABLE XIII.

THE OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

To know the mistress' humour right,
 See if her maids are clean and tight;
 If Betty waits without her stays,
 She copies but her lady's ways.
 When Miss comes in with boist'rous shout,
 And drops no curt'sy going out,
 Depend upon't, mamma is one
 Who reads or drinks too much alone.

If bottled beer her thirst asswage,
 She feels enthusiastick rage,
 And burns with ardour to inherit
 The gifts, and workings of the spirit.
 If learnin' crack her giddy brains,
 No remedy but death remains.

Sum up the various ills of life,
And all are sweet, to such a wife.
At home superior wit she vaunts,
And twits her husband with his wants ;
Her ragged offspring all around,
Like pigs, are wall'wing on the ground ;
Impatient ever of controul,
She knows no order but of soul ;
With books her litter'd floor is spread,
Of nameless authors never read ;
Foul linen, petticoats, and lace
Fill up the intermediate space.
Abroad, at visitings, her tongue
Is never still, and always wrong ;
All meanings she defines away,
And stands, with truth and sense, at bay.

If e'er she meets a gentle heart,
Skill'd in the house-wife's useful art,
Who makes her family her care,
And builds contentment's temple there,
She starts at such mistakes in nature,
And cries, Lord help us! — what a creature !

Melissa, if the moral strike,
You'll find the fable not unlike.

An owl, puff'd up with self-conceit,
Lov'd learning better than his meat ;
Old manuscripts he treasur'd up,
And rummag'd ev'ry grocer's shop ;
At pastry-cooks was known to ply,
And strip, for science, ev'ry pie.
For modern poetry and wit,
He had read all that Blackmore writ ;
So intimate with Cnrl was grown,
His learned treasures were his own ;
To all his authors had access,
And sometimes would correct the press.

In logick he acquir'd such knowledge,
You'd swear him fellow of a college;
Alike to ev'ry art and science
His daring genius bid defiance,
And swallow'd wisdom with that haste,
That cits do custards at a feast.

Within the shelter of a wood,
One ev'ning, as he musing stood,
Hard by, upon a leafy spray,
A nightingale began his lay;
Sudden he starts, with anger stung,
And screeching interrupts the song.

Pert, busy thing! thy airs give o'er;
And let my contemplation soar.
What is the musick of thy voice,
But jarring dissonance, and noise?
Be wise: true harmony thou'lt find
Not in the throat, but in the mind;
By empty chirping not attain'd,
But by laborious study gain'd.
Go, read the authors Pope explodes,
Fathom the depth of Cibber's odes,
With modern plays improve thy wit,
Read all the learning Henley writ;
And if thou needs must sing, sing then,
And emulate the ways of men;
So shalt thou grow like me refin'd,
And bring improvement to thy kind.

Thou wretch! the little warbler cried,
Made up of ignorance and pride,
Ask all the birds, and they'll declare,
A greater blockhead wings not air.
Read o'er thyself, thy talents scan;
Science was only meant for man.
No senseless authors me molest,
I mind the duties of my nest;

With careful wing protect my young,
And cheer their ev'nings with a song;
Make short the weary trav'ller's way,
And warble in the poet's lay.

Thus foll'wing nature, and her laws,
From men and birds I claim applause;
While, nurs'd in pedantry and sloth,
An owl is scorn'd alike by both.

FABLE XIV.

THE SPARROW AND THE DOVE.

It was, as learn'd traditions say,
Upon an April's blithsome day,
When pleasure, ever on the wing,
Return'd, companion of the spring,
And cheer'd the birds with am'rous heat,
Instructing little hearts to beat;
A sparrow, frolick, gay, and young,
Of bold address, and slippan't tongue,
Just left his lady of a night,
Like him, to follow new delight,

The youth, of many a conquest vain,
Flew off to seek the chirping train;
The chirping train he quickly found,
And with a saucy ease bow'd round.

For ev'ry she his bosom burns,
And this, and that, he woo's by turns;
And here a sigh, and there a bill,
And here—Those eyes, so form'd to kill!
And now with ready tongue he strings,
Unmeaning, soft, resistless things;

With vows, and *dem-me*'s skill'd to woo
As other pretty fellows do.

Not that he thought this short essay
A prologue needful to his play;
No; trust me, says our learned letter,
He knew the virtuous sex much better;
But these he held as specious arts,
To shew his own superior parts,
The form of decency to shield,
And give a just pretence to yield.

Thus finishing his courtly play,
He mark'd the fav'rite of a day;
With careless impudence drew near,
And whisper'd hebrew in her ear;
A hint which, like the Masons' sign,
The conscious can alone divine.

The flutt'ring nymph, expert at feigning,
Cried, Sir!—pray Sir, explain your meaning—
Go prate to those that may endure ye—
To me this rudeness!—I'll assure ye——
Then off she glided, like a swallow,
As saying——You guess where to follow.

To such as know the party set,
'Tis needless to declare they met;
The parsons's barn, as authors mention,
Confess'd the fair had apprehension.
Her honour there secure from stain,
She held all farther trifling vain,
No more affected to be coy,
But rush'd licentious on the joy.

Hist, love! — The male companion cried,
Retire a while, I fear we're spied.
Nor was the caution vain; he saw
A turtle rustling in the straw,
While o'er her callow brood she hung,
And fondly thus address'd her young:

Ye tender objects of my care !
Peace, peace, ye little helpless pair ;
Anon he comes, your gentle sire,
And brings you all your hearts require.
For us, his infants, and his bride,
For us, with only love to guide,
Our lord assumes an eagle's speed,
And, like a lion, dares to bleed.
Nor yet by wint'ry skies confin'd,
He mounts upon the rudest wind,
From danger tears the vital spoil,
And with affection sweetens toil.
Ah cease, too vent'rous ! cease to dare ;
In thine, our dearer safety spare !
From him, ye cruel falcons, stray,
And turn, ye fowlers, far away !

Should I survive to see the day,
That tears me from myself away,
That cancels all that heav'n could give,
The life by which alone I live,
Alas, how more than lost were I,
Who, in the thought, already die !
Ye Pow'rs, whom men and birds obey,
Great rulers of your creatures, say,
Why mourning comes by bliss convey'd,
And ev'n the sweets of love allay'd !
Where grows enjoyment, tall, and fair,
Around it twines entangling care ;
While fear for what our souls possess
Enervates ev'ry pow'r to bless ;
Yet friendship forms the bliss above,
And, life ! what art thou, without love ?

Our hero, who had heard apart,
Felt something moving in his heart,
But quickly with disdain suppress'd
The virtue rising in his breast ;

And first he feign'd to laugh aloud,
And next approaching smil'd and bow'd.

Madam, you must not think me rude;
Good manners never can intrude;
I vow I come thro' pure good nature —
(Upon my soul ! a charming creature !)
Are these the comforts of a wife ?
This careful, cloister'd, moping life ?
No doubt, that odious thing, call'd duty,
Is a sweet province for a beauty.
Thou pretty ignorance ! thy will
Is measur'd to thy want of skill;
That good old-fashion'd dame, thy mother,
Has taught thy infant years no other.
The greatest ill in the creation,
Is sure the want of education.

But think ye ? — tell me without feigning,
Have all these charms no farther meaning ?
Dame nature, if you don't forget her,
Might teach your ladyship much better.
For shame ! reject this mean employment,
Enter the world, and taste enjoyment ;
Where time, by circling bliss, we measure :
Beauty was form'd alone for pleasure ;
Come, prove the blessing ; follow me :
Be wise, be happy, and be free.

Kind Sir, replied our matron chaste,
Your zeal seems pretty much in haste ;
I own, the fondness to be bless'd
Is a deep thirst in ev'ry breast ;
Of blessings too I have my store
Yet quarrel not, should heav'n give more ;
Then prove the change to be expedient,
And think me, Sir, your most obedient.

Here turning, as to one inferior,
Our gallant spoke, and smil'd superior.

Methinks to quit your boasted station
Requires a world of hesitation ;
Where brats and bonds are held a blessing,
The case, I doubt, is past redressing.
Why, child, suppose the joys I mention,
Were the mere fruits of my invention,
You've cause sufficient for your carriage,
In flying from the curse of marriage ;
That sly decoy, with varied snares,
That takes your widgeons in by pairs ;
Alike to husband, and to wife,
The cure of love, and bane of life ;
The only method of forecasting,
To make misfortune firm and lasting ;
The sin, by heav'n's peculiar sentence,
Unpardon'd, through a life's repentance :
It is the double snake, that weds
A common tail to diff'rent heads,
That lead the carcass still astray,
By dragging each a diff'rent way.
Of all the ills that may attend me,
From marriage, mighty gods, defend me !

Give me frank nature's wild demesne,
And boundless tract of air serene,
Where fancy, ever wing'd for change,
Delights to sport, delights to range ;
There, liberty ! to thee is owing
Whate'er of bliss is worth bestowing ;
Delights, still varied, and divine,
Sweet goddess of the hills ! are thine.

What say you now, you pretty pink, you ?
Have I for once spoke reason, think you ?
You take me now for no romancer —
Come, never study for an answer ;
Away, cast ev'ry care behind ye,
And fly where joy alone shall find ye.

Soft yet, return'd our female fencer,
 A question more, or so —— and then, Sir :
 You've rallied me with sense exceeding,
 With much fine wit, and better breeding;
 But pray, Sir, how do you contrive it?
 Do those of your world never wive it?
 — No, no. — How then? — Why, dare I tell?
 What does the bus'ness full as well.
 Do you ne'er love? — An hour at leisure. —
 Have you no friendships? — Yes, for pleasure. —
 No care for little ones? — We get 'em;
 The rest the mothers mind, and let 'em. —

Thou wretch! rejoin'd the kindling dove,
 Quite lost to life, as lost to love!
 Whene'er misfortune comes, how just!
 And come misfortune surely must;
 In the dread season of dismay,
 In that your hour of trial, say,
 Who then shall prop your sinking heart,
 Who bear affliction's weightier part?

Say, when the black-brow'd welkin bends,
 And winter's gloomy form impends,
 To mourning turns all transient chear,
 And blasts the melancholy year;
 For times, at no persuasion, stay;
 Nor vice can find perpetual May;
 Then where's that tongue by folly fed,
 That soul of pertness, whither fled?
 All shrunk within thy lonely nest,
 Forlorn, abandoned, and unblest'd;
 No friends by cordial bonds allied,
 Shall seek thy cold, unsocial, side;
 No chirping prattlers to delight
 Shall turn the long-enduring night;
 No bride her words of balm impart,
 And warm thee at her constant heart.

Freedom, restrain'd by reason's force,
Is as the sun's unvarying course,
Benignly active, sweetly bright,
Affording warmth, affording light;
But torn from virtue's sacred rules
Becomes a comet, gaz'd by fools,
Foreboding cares, and storms, and strife,
And fraught with all the plagues of life.

Thou fool! by union ev'ry creature
Subsists, through universal nature;
And this, to beings void of mind,
Is wedlock, of a meaner kind.

While womb'd in space, primæval clay
A yet unfashion'd embryo lay,
The source of endless good above
Shot down his spark of kindling love;
Touch'd by the all-enliv'ning flame,
Then motion first exulting came;
Each atom sought its sep'rate class,
Through many a fair, enamour'd mass;
Love cast the central charm around,
And with eternal nuptials bound.
Then form and order o'er the sky
First train'd their bridal pomp on high;
The sun display'd his orb to sight,
And burnt with hymeneal light.

Hence nature's virgin-womb conceiv'd
And with the genial burden heav'd;
Forth came the oak, her first born heir,
And scal'd the breathing steep of air;
Then infant stems of various use,
Imbib'd her soft, maternal juice;
The flow'rs, in early bloom disclos'd,
Upon her fragrant breast repos'd;
Within her warm embraces grew
A race of endless form and hue;

Then pour'd her lesser offspring round,
And fondly cloath'd their parent ground.

Nor here alone the virtue reign'd,
By matter's cumb'ring form detain'd ;
But thence, subliming, and refin'd,
Aspir'd, and reach'd its kindred mind.
Caught in the fond, celestial fire,
The mind perceiv'd unknown desire,
And now with kind effusion flow'd,
And now with cordial ardours glow'd,
Beheld the sympathetick fair,
And lov'd its own resemblance there ;
On all with circling radiance shone,
But cent'ring, fix'd on one alone ;
There clasp'd the heav'n-appointed wife,
And doubled ev'ry joy of life.

Here ever blessing, ever bless'd,
Resides this beauty of the breast,
As from his palace, here the god
Still beams effulgent bliss abroad,
Here gems his own eternal round,
The ring, by which the world is bound,
Here bids his seat of empire grow,
And builds his little heav'n below.

The bridal partners thus allied,
And thus in sweet accordance tied,
One body, heart and spirit live,
Enrich'd by ev'ry joy they give ;
Like echo, from her vocal hold,
Return'd in musick twenty fold.
Their union firm, and undecay'd,
Nor time can shake. nor pow'r invade.
But as the stem and scion stand,
Ingrafted by a skilful hand,
They check the tempest's wint'ry rage,
And bloom and strengthen into age.

A thousand amities unknown,
And pow'rs perceiv'd by love alone,
Endearing looks, and chaste desire,
Fan, and support the mutual fire,
Whose flame, perpetual as refin'd,
Is fed by an immortal mind.

Nor yet the nuptial sanction ends,
Like Nile it opens, and descends,
Which, by apparent windings led,
We trace to its celestial head.
The sire, first springing from above,
Becomes the source of life and love,
And gives his filial heir to flow,
In fondness down on sons below:
Thus roll'd in one continu'd tide,
To time's extremest verge they glide,
While kindred streams, on either hand,
Branch forth in blessings o'er the land.

Thee, wretch! no lisping babe shall name,
No late-returning brother claim,
No kinsman on thy road rejoice,
No sister greet thy ent'ring voice,
With partial eyes no parents see,
And bless their years restor'd in thee.

In age rejected, or declin'd,
An alien ev'n among thy kind,
The partner of thy scorn'd embrace,
Shall play the wanton in thy face,
Each spark unplume thy little pride,
All friendship fly thy faithless side,
Thy name shall like thy carcass rot,
In sickness spurn'd, in death forgot.

All-giving pow'r! great source of life!
O hear the parent! hear the wife!
That life thou lendest from above,
Though little, make it large in love:

O bid my feeling heart expand
To ev'ry claim, on ev'ry hand;
To those, from whom my days I drew,
To these, in whom those days renew,
To all my kin, however wide,
In cordial warmth, as blood allied,
To friends, with steely fetters twin'd,
And to the cruel not unkind!

But chief, the lord of my desire,
My life, myself, my soul, my sire,
Friends, children, all that wish can claim,
Chaste passion clasp, and rapture name;
O spare him, spare him, gracious pow'r!
O give him to my latest hour!
Let me my length of life employ,
To give my sole enjoyment joy.
His love, let mutual love excite;
Turn all my cares to his delight,
And ev'ry needless blessing spare,
Wherein my darling wants a share.
When he with graceful action wooes,
And sweetly bills, and fondly cooes,
Ah! deck me, to his eyes alone,
With charms attractive as his own,
And in my circling wings caress'd,
Give all the lover to my breast.
Then in our chaste, connubial bed,
My bosom pillow'd for his head,
His eyes with blissful slumbers close,
And watch, with me, my lord's repose,
Your peace around his temples twine,
And love him, with a love like mine.

And, for I know his gen'rous flame,
Beyond whate'er my sex can claim,
Me too to your protection take,
And spare me for my husband's sake.

Let one unruffled, calm delight,
The loving, and belov'd unite ;
One pure desire our bosoms warm,
One will direct, one wish inform ;
Through life one mutual aid sustain,
In death, one peaceful grave contain.

While swelling with the darling theme,
Her accents pour'd an endless stream,
The well-known wings a sound impart,
That reach'd her ear, and touch'd her heart ;
Quick dropp'd the musick of her tongue,
And forth, with eager joy, she sprung.
As swift her ent'ring consort flew,
And plum'd, and kindled at the view ;
Their wings, their souls embracing meet,
Their hearts with answ'ring measure beat ;
Half lost in sacred sweets, and bless'd
With raptures felt, but ne'er express'd.

Straight to her humble roof she led
The partner of her spotless bed ;
Her young, a flutt'ring pair, arise,
Their welcome sparkling in their eyes ;
Transported, to their sire they bound,
And hang with speechless action round.
In pleasure wrapt the parents stand,
And see their little wings expand ;
The sire, his life-sustaining prize
To each expecting bill applies,
There fondly pours the wheaten spoil,
With transport giv'n, tho' won with toil ;
While, all collected at the sight,
And silent through supreme delight,
The fair high heav'n of bliss beguiles,
And on her lord, and infants smiles.

The sparrow, whose attention hung
Upon the dove's enchanting tongue,

Of all his little slights disarm'd,
 And from himself, by virtue, charm'd,
 When now he saw, what only seem'd,
 A fact, so late a fable deem'd,
 His soul to envy he resign'd,
 His hours of folly to the wind,
 In secret wish'd a turtle too,
 And sighing to himself withdrew.

FABLE XV.

THE FEMALE SEDUCERS.

'Tis said of widow, maid, and wife,
 That honour is a woman's life.
 Unhappy sex! who only claim
 A being, in the breath of fame,
 Which tainted, not the quick'ning gales
 That sweep Sabæa's spicy vales,
 Nor all the healing sweets restore,
 That breathe along Arabia's shore.

The trav'ler, if he chance to stray,
 May turn uncensur'd to his way;
 Polluted streams again are pure,
 And deepest wounds admit a cure;
 But woman no redemption knows,
 The wounds of honour never close.

Tho' distant ev'ry hand to guide,
 Nor skill'd on life's tempestuous tide,
 If once her feeble bark recede,
 Or deviate from the course decreed,
 In vain she seeks the friendless shore,
 Her swifter folly flies before;

The circling ports against her close,
And shut the wand'rer from repose ;
'Till, by conflicting waves oppress'd,
Her found'ring pinnace sinks to rest.

Are there no off'rings to atone
For but a single error?—None.
Tho' woman is avow'd, of old,
No daughter of celestial mould,
Her temp'ring not without alloy,
And form'd but of the finer clay,
We challenge from the mortal dame
The strength angelick natures claim ;
Nay more ; for sacred stories tell,
That ev'n immortal angels fell.

Whatever fills the teeming sphere,
Of humid earth, and ambient air,
With varying elements endu'd,
Was form'd to fall, and rise renew'd.

The stars no fix'd duration know,
Wide oceans ebb, again to flow,
The moon repletes her waning face,
All-beauteous, from her late disgrace,
And suns, that mourn approaching night,
Refulgent rise with new-born light.

In vain may death and time subdue,
While nature mints her race anew,
And holds some vital spark apart,
Like virtue, hid in ev'ry heart ;
'Tis hence reviving warmth is seen,
To cloath a naked world in green.
No longer barr'd by winter's cold,
Again the gates of life unfold ;
Again each insect tries his wing,
And lifts fresh pinions on the spring ;
Again from ev'ry latent root
The bladed stem, and tendril shoot,

Exhaling incense to the skies,
Again to perish, and to rise.

And must weak woman then disown
The change, to which a world is prone?
In one meridian brightness shine,
And ne'er like ev'ning suns decline?
Resolv'd and firm alone? — Is this
What we demand of woman? — Yes.

But should the spark of vestal fire,
In some unguarded hour expire.
Or should the nightly thief invade
Hesperia's chaste and sacred shade,
Of all the blooming spoil possess'd,
The dragon honour charm'd to rest,
Shall virtue's flame no more return?
No more with virgin splendor burn?
No more the ravag'd garden blow
With spring's succeeding blossom? — No.
Pity may mourn, but not restore;
And woman falls, to rise no more.

Within this sublunary sphere,
A country lies — no matter where;
The clime may readily be found
By all who tread poetick ground,
A stream, call'd life, across it glides,
And equally the land divides;
And here, of Vice the province lies,
And there, the hills of Virtue rise.

Upon a mountain's airy stand,
Whose summit look'd to either land,
An ancient pair their dwelling chose,
As well for prospect as repose;
For mutual faith they long were fam'd,
And Temp'rance, and Religion, nam'd.

A num'rous progeny divine
Confess'd the honours of their line;

But in a little daughter fair
 Was center'd more than half their care ;
 For heav'n, to gratulate her birth,
 Gave signs of future joy to earth ;
 White was the robe this infant wore,
 And Chastity the name she bore.

As now the maid in stature grew,
 (A flow'r just op'ning to the view)
 Oft thro' her native lawns she stray'd,
 And wrestling with the lambkins play'd ;
 Her looks diffusive sweets bequeath'd,
 The breeze grew purer as she breath'd,
 The morn her radiant blush assum'd,
 The spring with earlier fragrance bloom'd,
 And nature yearly took delight,
 Like her, to dress the world in white.

But when her rising form was seen
 To reach the crisis of fifteen,
 Her parents up the mountain's head,
 With anxious step their darling led ;
 By turns they snatch'd her to their breast,
 And thus the fears of age express'd :

O ! joyful cause of many a care !
 O ! daughter too divinely fair !
 Yon world, on this important day,
 Demands thee to a dang'rous way,
 A painful journey, all must go,
 Whose doubtful period none can know ;
 Whose due direction who can find,
 Where reason's mute, and sense is blind ?
 Ah, what unequal leaders these,
 Thro' such a wide, perplexing maze !
 Then mark the warnings of the wise,
 And learn what love, and years advise.

Far to the right thy prospect bend,
 Where yonder tow'ring hills ascend ;

Lo, there the arduous paths in view,
Which Virtue, and her sons pursue;
With toil o'er less'ning earth they rise,
And gain, and gain upon the skies.
Narrow's the way her children tread,
No walk for pleasure smoothly spread,
But rough, and difficult, and steep,
Painful to climb, and hard to keep.

Fruits immature those lands dispense,
A food indelicate to sense,
Of taste unpleasant; yet from those
Pure health with chearful vigour flows,
And strength, unfeeling of decay,
Throughout the long, laborious way.

Hence, as they scale that heav'nly road,
Each limb is lighten'd of its load;
From earth refining still they go,
And leave the mortal weight below;
Then spreads the strait, the doubtful clears,
And smooth the rugged-path appears;
For custom turns fatigue to ease,
And, taught by virtue, pain can please.

At length, the toilsome journey o'er,
And near the bright, celestial shore,
A gulph, black, fearful, and profound,
Appears, of either world the bound,
Thro' darkness, leading up to light;
Sense backwards shrinks, and shuns the sight;
For there the transitory train,
Of time, and form, and care, and pain,
And matter's gross incumb'ring mass,
Man's late associates, cannot pass;
But sinking, quit th' immortal charge,
And leave the wond'ring soul at large;
Lightly she wings her obvious way,
And mingles with eternal day.

Thither, O thither wing thy speed,
Tho' pleasure charm, or pain impede;
To such th' all-bounteous Pow'r has giv'n,
For present earth, a future heav'n;
For trivial loss, unmeasur'd gain;
And endless bliss, for transient pain.

Then fear, ah! fear to turn thy sight,
Where yonder flow'ry fields invite;
Wide on the left the path-way bends,
And with pernicious ease descends;
There sweet to sense, and fair to show,
New-planted Edens seem to blow,
Trees that delicious poison bear,
For death is vegetable there.

Hence is the frame of health unbrac'd,
Each sinew slack'ning at the taste,
The soul to passion yields her throne,
And sees with organs not her own;
While, like the slumb'rer in the night,
Pleas'd with the shadowy dream of light,
Before her alienated eyes,
The scenes of fairy-land arise;
The puppet world's amusing show,
Dipt in the gayly colour'd bow,
Sceptres, and wreaths, and glitt'ring things,
The toys of infants, and of kings,
That tempt, along the baneful plain,
The idly wise, and lightly vain,
Till verging on the gulphy shore,
Sudden they sink, and rise no more.

But list to what the fates declare;
Tho' thou art woman, frail as fair,
If once thy sliding foot should stray,
Once quit yon heav'n-appointed way,
For thee, lost maid, for thee alone,
Nor pray'rs shall plead, nor tears atone;

Reproach, scorn, infamy, and hate,
On thy returning steps shall wait,
Thy form be loath'd by ev'ry eye,
And ev'ry foot thy presence fly.

Thus arm'd with words of potent sound,
Like guardian-angels plac'd around,
A charm, by Truth divinely cast,
Forward our young advent'rer pass'd,
Forth from her sacred eye-lids sent,
Like morn, fore-running radiance went,
While Honour, hand-maid late assign'd,
Upheld her lucid train behind.

Awe-struck the much admiring crowd
Before the virgin vision bow'd,
Gaz'd with an ever new delight,
And caught fresh virtue at the sight ;
For not of earth's unequal frame
They deem the heav'n-compounded dame ;
If matter, sure the most refin'd,
High wrought, and temper'd into mind,
Some darling daughter of the day,
And bodied by her native ray.

Where'er she passes, thousands bend,
And thousands, where she moves, attend ;
Her ways observant eyes confess,
Her steps pursuing praises bless ;
While to the elevated maid
Oblations, as to heav'n, are paid.

'Twas on an ever blithsome day,
The jovial birth of rosy May,
When genial warmth, no more suppress'd,
New melts the frost in ev'ry breast,
The cheek with secret flushing dies ;
And looks kind things from chastest eyes ;
The sun with healthier visage glows,
Aside his clouded kerchief throws,

And dances up th' etherial plain,
Where late he us'd to climb with pain,
While nature, as from bonds set free,
Springs out, and gives a loose to glee.

And now for momentary rest,
The nymph her travell'd step repress'd,
Just turn'd to view the stage attain'd,
And gloried in the height she gain'd.

Out-stretch'd before her wide survey,
The realms of sweet perdition lay,
And pity touch'd her soul with woe,
To see a world so lost below ;
When straight the breeze began to breathe
Airs gently wafted from beneath,
That bore commission'd witchcraft thence,
And reach'd her sympathy of sense ;
No sounds of discord, that disclose
A people sunk and lost in woes,
But as of present good possess'd,
The very triumph of the bless'd.
The maid in wrapt attention hung,
While thus approaching sirens sung :

Hither, fairest, hither haste,
Brightest beauty, come and taste
What the pow'rs of bliss unfold,
Joys too mighty to be told ;
Taste what extasies they give ;
Dying raptures taste and live.

In thy lap, disdaining measure,
Nature empties all her treasure,
Soft desires that sweetly languish,
Fierce delights that rise to anguish ;
Fairest, dost thou yet delay ?
Brightest beauty, come away.

List not, when the froward chide,
Sons of pedantry and pride,

Snarlers, to whose feeble sense
April's sunshine is offence ;
Age and envy will advise
Ev'n against the joy they prize.

Come, in pleasure's balmy bowl,
Slake the thirstings of thy soul,
Till thy raptur'd pow'rs are fainting
With enjoyment past the painting ;
Fairest, dost thou yet delay ?
Brightest beauty, come away.

So sung the sirens, as of yore,
Upon the false Ausonian shore ;
And O ! for that preventing chain,
That bound Ulysses on the main,
That so our fair one might withstand
The covert ruin, now at hand.

The song her charm'd attention drew,
When now the tempters stood in view ;
Curiosity, with prying eyes,
And hands of busy, bold emprise ;
Like Hermes, feather'd were her feet,
And, like fore-running fancy, fleet.
By search untaught, by toil untir'd,
To novelty she still aspir'd,
Tasteless of ev'ry good possess'd,
And but in expectation bless'd.

With her associate Pleasure came,
Gay Pleasure, frolick-loving dame,
Her mien all swimming in delight,
Her beauties half reveal'd to sight ;
Loose flow'd her garments from the ground,
And caught the kissing winds around.
As erst Medusa's looks were known
To turn beholders into stone,
A dire reversion here they felt,
And in the eye of Pleasure melt.

Her glance with sweet persuasion charm'd,
Unnerv'd the strong, the steel'd disarm'd;
No safety ev'n the flying find,
Who, vent'rous, look but once behind.

Thus was the much admiring maid,
While distant, more than half betray'd.
With smiles, and adulation bland,
They join'd her side, and seiz'd her hand;
Their touch envenom'd sweets instill'd,
Her frame with new pulsations thrill'd;
While half consenting, half denying,
Reluctant now, and now complying,
Amidst a war of hopes, and fears,
Of trembling wishes, smiling tears,
Still down, and down, the winning pair
Compell'd the struggling, yielding fair.
As when some stately vessel, bound
To blest Arabia's distant ground,
Borne from her courses, haply lights
Where Barca's flow'ry clime invites,
Conceal'd around whose treach'rous land
Lurk the dire rock and dang'rous sand;
The pilot warns with sail and oar
To shun the much suspected shore,
In vain; the tide, too subtly strong,
Still bears the wrestling bark along,
'Till found'ring, she resigns to fate,
And sinks, o'erwhelm'd, with all her freight.
So, baffling ev'ry bar to sin,
And heav'n's own pilot plac'd within,
Along the devious smooth descent,
With pow'rs increasing as they went,
The dames, accusom'd to subdue,
As with a rapid current drew,
And o'er the fatal bounds convey'd
The lost, the long reluctant maid.

Here stop, ye fair ones, and beware,
Nor send your fond affections there;
Yet, yet your darling, now deplor'd,
May turn, to you, and heav'n, restor'd;
Till then, with weeping Honour wait,
The servant of her better fate,
With Honour, left upon the shore,
Her friend, and handmaid, now no more;
Nor, with the guilty world, upbraid
The fortunes of a wretch betray'd;
But o'er her failing cast a veil,
Rememb'ring you yourselves are frail.

And now, from all-enquiring light,
Fast fled the conscious shades of night;
The damsel, from a short repose,
Confounded at her plight, arose.

As when, with slumb'rous weight oppress'd,
Some wealthy miser sinks to rest,
Where felons eye the glitt'ring prey,
And steal his hoard of joys away;
He, borne where golden Indus streams,
Of pearl, and quarried di'mond dreams,
Like Midas, turns the glebe to ore,
And stands all wrapt amidst his store,
But wakens, naked, and despoil'd
Of that, for which his years had toil'd.

So far'd the nymph, her treasure flown,
And turn'd, like Niobe, to stone,
Within, without, obscure, and void,
She felt all ravag'd, all destroy'd.
And, O thou curs'd, insidious coast!
Are these the blessings thou canst boast?
These, Virtue! these the joys they find,
Who leave thy heav'n-topt hills behind?
Shade me, ye pines; ye caverns, hide;
Ye mountains, cover me, she cried!

Her trumpet Slander rais'd on high,
And told the tidings to the sky;
Contempt discharg'd a living dart,
A side-long viper to her heart;
Reproach breath'd poisons o'er her face,
And soil'd, and blasted ev'ry grace;
Officious Shame, her handmaid new,
Still turn'd the mirror to her view,
While those in crimes the deepest died,
Approach'd to whiten at her side:
And ev'ry lewd, insulting dame
Upon her folly rose to fame.

What should she do? Attempt once more
To gain the late-deserted shore?
So trusting, back the Mourner flew,
As fast the train of fiends pursue.

Again the farther shore's attain'd,
Again the land of Virtue gain'd;
But echo gathers in the wind,
And shews her instant foes behind.
Amaz'd, with headlong speed she tends
Where late she left an host of friends;
Alas! those shrinking friends decline,
Nor longer own that form divine;
With fear they mark the foll'wing cry,
And from the lonely trembler fly,
Or backward drive her on the coast,
Where peace was wreck'd, and honour lost.
From earth thus hoping aid in vain,
To heav'n not daring to complain,
No truce by hostile clamour giv'n,
And from the face of friendship driv'n,
The nymph sunk prostrate on the ground,
With all her weight of woes around.

Enthron'd within a circling sky,
Upon a mount, o'er mountains high,

All radiant sate, as in a shrine,
Virtue, first effluence divine ;
Far, far above the scenes of woe,
That shut this cloud-wrapt world below ;
Superior goddess, essence bright,
Beauty of uncreated light,
Whom should mortality survey,
As doom'd upon a certain day,
The breath of frailty must expire,
The world dissolve in living fire,
The gems of heav'n and solar flame
Be quench'd by her eternal beam,
And nature, quick'ning in her eye,
To rise a new-born phoenix, die.

Hence, unreveal'd to mortal view,
A veil around her form she threw,
Which three sad sisters of the shade,
Pain, Care, and Melancholy made.

Thro' this her all-enquiring eye,
Attentive from her station high,
Beheld, abandon'd to despair,
The ruins of her fav'rite fair ;
And with a voice, whose awful sound
Appal'd the guilty world around,
Bid the tumultuous winds be still,
To numbers bow'd each list'ning hill,
Uncurl'd the surging of the main,
And smooth'd the thorny bed of pain,
The golden harp of heav'n she strung,
And thus the tuneful goddess sung :

Lovely penitent, arise,
Come, and claim thy kindred skies ;
Come, thy sister angels say,
Thou hast wept thy stains away.

Let experience now decide
T'wixt the good and evil tried,

In the smooth, enchanted ground,
Say, unfold the treasures found.

Structures, rais'd by morning dreams,
Sands, that trip the flitting streams,
Down, that anchors on the air,
Clouds, that paint their changes there.

Seas that smoothly dimpling lie,
While the storm impends on high,
Showing, in an obvious glass,
Joys that in possession pass;

Transient, fickle, light, and gay,
Flatt'ring, only to betray;
What, alas! can life contain!
Life! like all its circles — vain.

Will the stork, intending rest,
On the billow build her nest?
Will the bee demand his store
From the bleak, and bladeless shore?
Man alone, intent to stray,
Ever turns from wisdom's way,
Lays up wealth in foreign land,
Sows the sea, and plows the sand.

Soon this elemental mass,
Soon th' incumb'ring world shall pass,
Form be wrapt in wasting fire,
Time be spent, and life expire.

Then, ye boasted works of men,
Where is your asylum then?
Sons of pleasure, sons of care,
Tell me, mortals, tell me where?

Gone, like traces on the deep,
Like a sceptre grasp'd in sleep,
Dews exhal'd from morning glades,
Melting snows, and gliding shades.

Pass the world, and what's behind?
Virtue's gold, by fire refin'd;

From an universe deprav'd,
From the wreck of nature sav'd.

Like the life-supporting grain,
Fruit of patience and of pain,
On the swain's autumnal day,
Winnow'd from the chaff away.

Little trembler, fear no more,
Thou hast plenteous crops in store;
Seed, by genial sorrows sown,
More than all thy scorers own.

What tho' hostile earth despise,
Heav'n beholds with gentler eyes;
Heav'n thy friendless steps shall guide,
Chear thy hours, and guard thy side.

When the fatal trump shall sound,
When th'immortals pour around,
Heav'n shall thy return attest,
Hail'd by myriads of the bless'd.

Little native of the skies,
Lovely penitent, arise;
Calm thy bosom, clear thy brow,
Virtue is thy sister now.

More delightful are my woes,
Than the rapture pleasure knows:
Richer far the weeds I bring,
Than the robes that grace a king.

On my wars, of shortest date,
Crowns of endless triumph wait;
On my cares, a period bless'd;
On my toils, eternal rest.

Come with Virtue at thy side,
Come, be ev'ry bar defied,
'Till we gain our native shore,
Sister, come, and turn no more.

FABLE XVI.

LOVE AND VANITY.

THE breezy morning breath'd perfume,
The wak'ning flow'rs unveil'd their bloom,
Up with the sun, from short repose
Gay health and lusty labour rose,
The milk-maid carol'd at her pail,
And shepherds whistled o'er the dale;
When Love, who led a rural life,
Remote from bustle, state, and strife,
Forth from his thatch-roof'd cottage stray'd,
And stroll'd along the dewy glade.

A nymph, who lightly trip'd it by,
To quick attention turn'd his eye;
He mark'd the gesture of the fair,
Her self-sufficient grace and air,
Her steps that mincing meant to please,
Her studied negligence and ease;
And curious to enquire what meant
This thing of prettiness and paint,
Approaching spoke, and bow'd observant;
The lady, slightly,—Sir, your servant.—

Such beauty in so rude a place!
Fair-one, you do the country grace;
At court, no doubt, the publick care,
But Love has small acquaintance there.—

Yes, Sir, replied the flutt'ring dame,
This form confesses whence it came;
But dear variety, you know,
Can make us pride and pomp forego.
My name is Vanity, I sway
The utmost islands of the sea;

Within my court all honour centers ;
I raise the meanest soul that enters ,
Endow with latent gifts and graces ,
And model fools for posts and places .

As Vanity appoints at pleasure ,
The world receives its weight and measure ;
Hence all the grand concerns of life ,
Joys, cares, plagues, passions, peace and strife .

Reflect how far my pow'r prevails ,
When I step in where nature fails ,
And ev'ry breach of sense repairing ,
Am bounteous still, where heav'n is sparing .

But chief in all their arts, and airs ,
Their playing, painting, pouts, and pray'rs ,
Their various habits and complexions ,
Fits, frolicks, foibles, and perfections ,
Their robing, curling and adorning ,
From noon to night, from night to morning ,
From six to sixty, sick or sound ,
I rule the female world around .

Hold there a moment, Cupid cried ,
Nor boast dominion quite so wide .
Was there no province to invade ,
But that by Love and Meekness sway'd ?
All other empire I resign ,
But be the sphere of beauty mine .

For in the downy lawn of rest
That opens on a woman's breast ,
Attended by my peaceful train ,
I choose to live, and choose to reign .

Far-sighted faith I bring along ,
And truth, above an army strong ;
And chastity, of icy mould ,
Within the burning tropicks cold ;
And lowliness, to whose mild brow
The pow'r and pride of nations bow ;

And modesty, with downcast eye,
That lends the morn her virgin die;
And innocence, array'd in light;
And honour, as a tow'r upright:
With sweetly winning graces, more
Than poets ever dreamt of yore,
In unaffected conduct free,
All smiling sisters, three times three,
And rosy peace, the cherub bless'd,
That nightly sings us all to rest.

Hence, from the bud of nature's prime,
From the first step of infant time,
Woman, the world's appointed light,
Has skirted ev'ry shade with white;
Has stood for imitation high,
To ev'ry heart and ev'ry eye;
From ancient deeds of fair renown,
Has brought her bright memorials down;
To time affix'd perpetual youth,
And form'd each tale of love and truth.

Upon a new Promethean plan,
She moulds the essence of a man,
Tempers his mass, his genius fires,
And, as a better soul, inspires.

The rude she softens, warms the cold,
Exalts the meek, and checks the bold,
Calls sloth from his supine repose,
Within the coward's bosom glows,
Of pride unplumes the lofty crest,
Bids bashful merit stand confess'd,
And like coarse metal from the mines,
Collects, irradiates, and refines.

The gentle science she imparts,
All manners smooths, informs all hearts;
From her sweet influence are felt
Passions that please, and thoughts that melt,

To stormy rage she bids controul,
And sinks serenely on the soul,
Softens Deucalion's flinty race,
And tunes the warring world to peace.

Thus arm'd to all that's light, and vain,
And freed from thy fantastick chain,
She fills the sphere by heav'n assign'd,
And rul'd by me, o'er-rules mankind.

He spoke. The nymph impatient stood,
And, laughing, thus her speech renew'd.

And pray, Sir, may I be so bold
To hope your pretty tale is told;
And next demand, without a cavil,
What new Utopia do you travel? —
Upon my word, these high-flown fancies
Shew depth of learning — in romances.

Why, what unfashion'd stuff you tell us,
Of buckram dames and tiptoe fellows!
Go, child; and when you're grown maturer,
You'll shoot your next opinion surer.

O such a pretty knack at painting!
And all for soft'ning, and for fainting!
Guess now, who can, a single feature,
Thro' the whole piece, of female nature!
Then mark! my looser hand may fit
The lines too coarse for Love to hit.

'Tis said that woman, prone to changing,
Thro' all the rounds of folly ranging,
On life's uncertain ocean riding,
No reason, rule, nor rudder guiding,
Is like the comet's wand'ring light,
Eccentrick, ominous, and bright,
Trackless, and shifting as the wind,
A sea whose fathom none can find,
A moon still changing and revolving,
A riddle past all human solving,

A bliss, a plague, a heav'n, a hell,
A — something that no man can tell.

Now learn a secret from a friend,
But keep your counsel, and attend.

Tho' in their tempers thought so distant,
Nor with their sex nor selves consistent,
'Tis but the diff'rence of a name,
And ev'ry woman is the same.
For as the world, however varied,
And thro' unnumber'd changes carried,
Of elemental modes and forms,
Clouds, meteors, colours, calms and storms,
Tho' in a thousand suits array'd,
Is of one subject matter made ;
So, Sir, a woman's constitution,
The world's enigma, finds solution,
And let her form be what you will,
I am the subject essence still.

With the first spark of female sense,
The speck of being, I commence,
Within the womb make fresh advances,
And dictate future qualms and fancies ;
Thence in the growing form expand,
With childhood travel hand in hand,
And give a taste to all their joys
In gewgaws, rattles, pomp, and noise.

And now, familiar and unaw'd,
I send the flutt'ring soul abroad.
Prais'd for her shape, her air, her mien,
The little goddess, and the queen,
'Takes at her infant shrine oblation,
And drinks sweet draughts of adulation.

Now blooming, tall, erect, and fair,
To dress, becomes her darling care ;
The realms of beauty then I bound,
I swell the hoop's enchanting round,

Shrink in the waist's descending size,
 Heav'd in the snowy bosom rise,
 High on the floating lappet sail,
 Or curl'd in tresses kiss the gale.
 Then to her glass I lead the fair,
 And shew the lovely idol there;
 Where, struck as by divine emotion,
 She bows with most sincere devotion,
 And numb'ring ev'ry beauty o'er,
 In secret bids the world adore.

Then all for parking, and parading,
 Coquetting, dancing, masquerading;
 For balls, plays, courts, and crowds what passion!
 And churches, sometimes — if the fashion;
 For women's sense of right and wrong
 Is rul'd by the almighty throng;
 Still turns to each meander tame,
 And swims, the straw of ev'ry stream;
 Her soul intrinsick worth rejects,
 Accomplish'd only in defects;
 Such excellence is her ambition,
 Folly, her wisest acquisition,
 And ev'n from pity and disdain,
 She'll cull some reason to be vain.

Thus, Sir, from ev'ry form and feature,
 The wealth and wants of female nature,
 And ev'n from vice, which you'd admire,
 I gather fuel to the fire;
 And on the very base of shame
 Erect my monument of fame.

Let me another truth attempt,
 Of which your godship has not dreamt.

Those shining virtues which you muster,
 Whence think you they derive their lustre?
 From native honour and devotion?
 O yes, a mighty likely notion!

Trust me, from titled dames to spinners,
'Tis I make saints, whoe'er makes sinners .
'Tis I instruct them to withdraw,
And hold presumptuous man in awe :
For female worth, as I inspire,
In just degrees still mounts the higher ,
And virtue, so extremely nice,
Demands long toil, and mighty price :
Like Sampson's pillars, fix'd elate,
I bear the sex's tott'ring state ;
Sap these, and in a moment's space
Down sinks the fabrick to its base.

Alike from titles and from toys
I spring, the fount of female joys ;
In ev'ry widow, wife, and miss,
The sole artificer of bliss ;
For them each tropick I explore,
I cleave the sand of ev'ry shore ;
For them uniting India's sail,
Sabæa breathes her farthest gale :
For them the bullion I refine,
Dig sense and virtue from the mine,
And from the bowels of invention,
Spin out the various arts you mention!

Nor bliss alone my pow'rs bestow,
They hold the sov'reign balm of woe ;
Beyond the stoick's boasted art,
I sooth the heaving of the heart ;
To pain give splendor and relief,
And gild the pallid face of grief.

Alike the palace and the plain
Admit the glories of my reign ;
Thro' ev'ry age, in ev'ry nation,
Taste, talents, tempers, state, and station,
Whate'er a woman says, I say :
Whate'er a woman spends, I pay ;

Alike I fill and empty bags,
Flutter in finery and rags;
With light coquets thro' folly range,
And with the prude disdain to change.

And now you'd think, 'twixt you and I,
That things were ripe for a reply. —
But soft, and while I'm in the mood,
Kindly permit me to conclude,
Their utmost mazes to unravel,
And touch the farthest step they travel.

When ev'ry pleasure's run aground,
And folly tir'd thro' many a round,
The nymph conceiving discontent hence,
May ripen to an hour's repentance,
And vapours, shed in pious moisture,
Dismiss her to a church or cloyster:
Then on I lead her, with devotion
Conspicuous in her dress and motion,
Inspire the heav'nly-breathing air,
Roll up the lucid eye in pray'r,
Soften the voice, and in the face
Look melting harmony, and grace.

Thus far extends my friendly pow'r
Nor quits her in her latest hour.
The couch of decent pain I spread,
In form recline her languid head;
Her thoughts I methodize in death,
And part not with her parting breath:
Then do I set, in order bright,
A length of fun'ral pomp to sight,
The glitt'ring tapers and attire,
The plumes, that whiten o'er her bier;
And last, presenting to her eye
Angelick fineries on high,
To scenes of painted bliss I waft her,
And form the heav'n she hopes hereafter.

In truth, rejoin'd love's gentle god,
You've gone a tedious length of road,
And strange, in all the toilsome way
No house of kind refreshment lay;
No nymph, whose virtues might have tempted,
To hold her from her sex exempted.

For one, we'll never quarrel, man;
Take her, and keep her, if you can;
And pleas'd I yield to your petition,
Since ev'ry fair, by such permission,
Will hold herself the one selected,
And so my system stands protected.

O deaf to virtue, deaf to glory,
To truths divinely vouch'd in story!
The godhead in his zeal return'd,
And kindling at her malice burn'd;
Then sweetly rais'd his voice, and told
Of heav'nly nymphs, rever'd of old;
Hipsipyle, who sav'd her sire,
And Portia's love, approv'd by fire;
Alike Penelope was quoted,
Nor laurel'd Daphne pass'd unnoted;
Nor Laodamia's fatal garter,
Nor fam'd Lucretia, honour's martyr;
Alceste's voluntary steel,
And Cath'rine, smiling on the wheel.
But who can hope to plant conviction,
Where cavil grows on contradiction!
Some she evades, or disavows,
Demurs to all, and none allows;
A kind of ancient thing call'd fables!
And thus the goddess turn'd the tables.

Now both in argument grew high,
And choler flash'd from either eye;
Nor wonder each refus'd to yield
The conquest of so fair a field.

When happily arriv'd in view
A goddess whom our grandames knew,
Of aspect grave, and sober gait,
Majestick, awful, and sedate,
As heav'n's autumnal eve serene,
When not a cloud o'ercasts the scene;
Once Prudence call'd, a matron fam'd,
And in old Rome Cornelia nam'd:
Quick, at a venture, both agree
To leave their strife to her decree.

And now by each the facts were stated
In form and manner as related.
The case was short. They crav'd opinion,
Which held o'er females chief dominion:
When thus the goddess, answ'ring mild,
First shook her gracious head, and smil'd.

Alas, how willing to comply,
Yet how unfit to judge am I!
In times of golden date, 'tis true,
I shar'd the fickle sex with you;
But from their presence long precluded,
Or held as one, whose form intruded,
Full fifty annual suns can tell,
Prudence has bid the sex farewell.

In this dilemma what to do,
Or who to think of, neither knew;
For both, still biass'd in opinion,
And arrogant of sole dominion,
Were forc'd to hold the case compounded,
Or leave the quarrel where they found it.

When in the nick, a rural fair,
Of inexperience'd gait and air,
Who ne'er had cross'd the neighb'ring lake,
Nor seen the world beyond a wake,
With cambrick coif, and kerchief clean,
Tript lightly by them o'er the green.

Now, now ! cried love's triumphant child,
And at approaching conquest smil'd,
If Vanity will once be guided,
Our diff'rence soon may be decided.
Behold yon wench, a fit occasion
To try your force of gay persuasion.
Go you, while I retire aloof,
Go, put those boasted pow'rs to proof;
And if your prevalence of art
Transcends my yet unerring dart,
I give the fav'rite contest o'er,
And ne'er will boast my empire more.

At once, so said, and so consented;
And well our goddess seem'd contented,
Nor panning, made a moment's stand,
But tript, and took the girl in hand.

Meanwhile the godhead, unalarm'd,
As one to each occasion arm'd,
Forth from his quiver cull'd a dart,
That erst had wounded many a heart;
Then bending, drew it to the head;
The bow-string twang'd, the arrow fled,
And to her secret soul address'd,
Transfix'd the whiteness of her breast.

But here the dame, whose guardian care
Had to a moment watch'd the fair,
At once her pocket mirror drew,
And held the wonder full in view;
As quickly rang'd in order bright,
A thousand beauties rush to sight,
A world of charms till now unknown,
A world reveal'd to her alone;
Enraptur'd stands the love-sick maid,
Suspended o'er the darling shade,
Here only fixes to admire,
And centers ev'ry fond desire.

THE END.

NOTES

ON THE

FABLES OF JOHN GAY.

PAGE 15, line 13. Hound: a dog who follows his game by the scent (*chien-courant*). Greyhound: a dog that follows game by his sight (*lévrier*).

Pag. 17, l. 5. Our skin supplies: most of the contracts made between different persons in England, such as leases, mortgages, marriage articles, etc. which are most subject to litigation, are written on parchment made of sheep's skins: the heads of drums are made of the same material.

Pag. 24, l. 2. Hangman's fees: for every criminal executed in England the government pays to the hangman a certain recompense.

Pag. 29, l. 24. A red-coat: the general military uniform of English soldiers is red: as they are reputed men of gallantry, the country maidens are taught to fear making acquaintance with them.

Pag. 34, l. 3. Yearly groat: it is a kind of proverbial saying, that a pin saved every day will amount to the value of a groat (four pence) a-year.

Ibid. l. 12. Gresham-hall: the college of physicians in London.

Pag. 35, line 17. Lightfoot: the supposed name of the shepherd's dog.

Pag. 37, l. 10. Second pay: the custom for the payment of portraits was half the sum agreed on, at first sitting; the remainder on delivering the picture.

Pag. 46, l. 1, 2. Straws laid across, the horse-shoe's

nailed, etc.: means imagined by weak country people to prevent the mischievous operations of witches, who, to escape the rage of the populace, are supposed able to mount into the air riding on a broomstick.

Pag. 49, l. 2. Puss: the common name for a cat, as *minette* in french.

Pag. 52, l. 18. Curl: a bookseller and publisher noted, at the time those fables were written, for selling counterfeited editions of books, scandalous memorials, anecdotes, etc.

Pag. 60, l. 5. Wand: certain officers under government carry white wands when they are in service, as marks of distinction.

Pag. 62, l. 15. Hockley-hole, Mary-bone: places near London, noted for combats of dogs, etc.

Pag. 63, l. 24. Ale and beer: these liquors are made from barley.

Pag. 65, l. 19, 20. Submit to fate, etc.: the 9th and 10th verses of a satyrick poem, called the Dispensary, written by doctor Garth.

Ibid. l. 28; 66, l. 2. The salt is spilt, knife and fork laid across, etc.: considered by the ignorant vulgar as prognosticks of misfortunes.

Pag. 66, l. 8. Cornish: the inhabitants of Cornwall.

Ibid. l. 24. Ball: a common name for a farmer's horse.

Pag. 67, l. 25, 27, 28. Turkeys, oysters, chine of salt pork: dishes frequently served at table about Christmas (*Noël*).

Pag. 70, l. 21. Southwark fair: a fair annually held in a suburb of London, like that of *S. Laurent* at Paris.

Pag. 71, l. 3, 4. Flip-flap round, somersets: different tricks shewn by tumblers (*faire la roue, le saut à la carpe*).

Pag. 74, l. 27. Wand: see note page 60, line 5.

Ibid. l. 30. A church-warden blows in: a saty-
rick stroke against the church-wardens, supposing
that they spend, in regaling themselves, the money
destined for the poor.

Pag. 97, l. 25. Moloch: a famous god of the
Ammonites, to whose idol children were sacrificed.
In the Bible, the Jews are often reproached with ma-
king these sacrifices to Moloch.

Pag. 100, l. 11. The lawn pursue: solicit to be
made bishops; those dignitaries wearing large sleeves
made of lawn (*linon*).

Pag. 101, l. 34. *Scandalum magnatum*: ca-
lummy against persons of high consideration.

Pag. 112, l. 1. Yap: the name of the squire's
dog.

Pag. 117, l. 1. A syllable is wanting to complete
the measure which Gay has adopted in these fables.
The same defect however appears in all the English
editions we have seen. We believe it ought to be

Now see him mad and drunk with power.

Pag. 131, l. 15, 19. Roan, Ball: names fre-
quently given to cart-horses.

Pag. 133, l. 5. Threw the main: a term used in
certain games with dice.

Ibid. l. 27. Pilf'ring rattle: the dice-box.

Pag. 145, l. 2. Corelli: an eminent Italian musi-
cian, who died in 1733.

Pag. 151, l. 26. He brought: the pronoun *he*
refers to *death*, which in English is of the masculine
gender.

NOTES

ON THE

FABLES OF EDWARD MOORE.

PAGE 156, line 27. Author of *Gustavus Vasa*: H. Brooke, Esq.

Pag. 176, l. 19. Past twelve o'clock: a guard, called a watchman, is posted in almost every street of London, during the night. To prove his vigilance, he is obliged, when the clock strikes, to announce the hour in a loud voice.

Pag. 178, l. 18. Hardwick: lord chancellor of England, during twenty years; one of the most able lawyers and upright judges that kingdom has ever known.

Pag. 189, l. 32. Blackmore: a physician who died in 1726. He wrote several poems, for which he gained but little reputation, especially among the other poets of his time.

Ibid. l. 33. Curl; see note on page 52.

Pag. 190, l. 22. Cibber: a celebrated comedian, and for many years poet-laureat, in which post he was obliged to write two odes every year; one for the new year, the other for the anniversary of the king's birth-day; these subjects had been so exhausted, that they could not be favourable to the genius of any poet. But Cibber so far surpassed the dulness of his predecessors, that Pope made him the hero of his celebrated mock-heroick poem, the *Dunciad*.

Ibid. l. 24. Henley: a licentious priest, noted,

even to a proverb, for want of morals, modesty, and learning.

Pag. 192, l. 1. *Dem-me*: an affected manner of pronouncing *Damn me*.

Ibid. l. 15. Masons' sign: one of the secrets of the society of Free-masons.

Pag. 220, l. 14. Utopia: an imaginary country where not only the government, but every thing, is perfect. An account of this country has been given by Sir Thomas More, chancellor of England in the reign of Henry the eighth, under the title of Utopia.

Pag. 222, l. 11. Parking: going frequently to the park, which is the principal publick walk at London, as the *Tuileries* at Paris.

S. BALDWIN.

END OF THE NOTES.

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BY JOHN GAY.

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